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Daily Report
Near East & South Asia

FBIS-NES-94-247 *23 December 1994*

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Arab-Israeli Talks

Israeli, Syrian Representatives Meet in Washington

Damascus Says Talks 'To Exchange Ideas'

JN2212195794 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1915 GMT 22 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Washington—The Syrian and Israeli ambassadors in Washington are expected to hold a meeting at the U.S. Department of State in Washington today to exchange ideas under the sponsorship and with the participation of the United States. The meeting, which will be attended by military men from both sides, takes place within the framework of the U.S. Administration's following up of the results of U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher's tour of the region two weeks ago and of its running of contacts between the parties to exchange ideas. This would contribute to narrowing gaps on the Syrian-Israeli track and paving the way for resuming talks on the Syrian and Lebanese tracks with the aim of achieving a just and comprehensive peace in the region.

'Security' Talks Begin

LD2212225494 Jerusalem Qol Visra'el in English 2230 GMT 22 Dec 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Israeli and Syrian representatives have been meeting today in Washington on security arrangements between the two countries. Israel is represented by its ambassador to the United States, Itamar Rabinovich, and by Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin's military secretary, Major General Dani Yatom. The Israeli Army chief of staff is also said to be in Washington, but it is not clear whether he is taking part in the talks themselves. The Syrian military representative is said to be a general.

Work on 'Security Package' Reported

TA2312074194 Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew 23 Dec 94 p 2

[Report by Avino'am Bar-Yosef in Washington]

[FBIS Translated Text] In Washington, Chief of Staff Ehud Baraq, a Syrian general, and Dennis Ross, head of the U.S. peace team, are working on a "security package" which will ultimately become the basis for the military appendix of a future agreement between Syria and Israel.

Baraq arrived in Washington two days ago accompanied by Major General Dani Yatom, the prime minister's military adviser, and immediately proceeded to hold discussions.

The emerging security document is designed to make the deployment of U.S. troops on the Golan a secondary element. The main role will be to consolidate the support of Israeli public opinion for a full withdrawal from the Golan.

It was further reported that at the end of this round of talks Dennis Ross and Martin Indyk may set out on another round of talks in Damascus and Jerusalem to clarify the extent of the differences in anticipation of another shuttle mission by U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher aimed at further softening the position of the sides.

The U.S. Administration plans to emphasize that the deployment of U.S. troops on the Golan will not be of supreme importance because it is meant to serve only as a supervisory element, and not as an "obstructing force" replacing the IDF [Israel Defense Forces].

Sources in Washington told MA'ARIV that "the ambassadors' channel" in the negotiations between Israel and Syria may emulate the format of the Oslo talks in the negotiations with the Palestinians. However, the deliberations between the sides are only at the beginning of the road.

At this stage, these are the main points of agreement:

—There is agreement on the principle that each side recognizes the security interests of the other side.

—There is agreement on the principle of the mutual demilitarization of territory.

—There is agreement on the principle of establishing buffer zones and thinned-out zones.

—Technological early-warning equipment will be supplied to both sides to monitor each other's intentions.

—A supervisory apparatus will be set up.

These are the main points of disagreement:

—There is disagreement about the mutual reduction of troops, the reduction of Syria's assault forces and missiles, and the reduction of troops on both sides of the border (including the Syrian demand to reduce the Israeli Air Force).

—There is disagreement on the size of the demilitarized areas and Syria's demand for equitable demilitarization (the Syrian demand for symmetry).

—There is disagreement on the Israeli demand for cooperation between the armies and for exchanges of officers.

—Details about the early-warning apparatuses, including the presence of Israeli officers at the Mt. Hermon outpost and of Syrian officers in an early-warning station in the Galilee.

—There is no agreement on the nature of the supervisory apparatus (a UN force or a U.S.-led multinational force as in the Sinai).

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—Disagreement on the Israeli-U.S. demand to expel the headquarters of terror organizations from Damascus.

It was further reported that despite the talks in "the ambassadors' channel," Lieutenant General Baraq and his Syrian counterpart have taken the lead at this point and left Ambassadors Itamar Rabinovich and Walid al-Mu'allim to play the role of second fiddle.

[Writing on page A1 of Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew on 23 December, Washington correspondent 'Aqiva Eldar reports that sources in Washington confirmed that Yatom and Baraq are in Washington, "but refused to comment on Baraq's role in the talks and noted that he would be back in Israel by the end of the week.

["At the Americans' insistence, both sides have imposed a total blackout on the composition of the delegations, the times of the talks, and their venue, and are not prepared to divulge where the officers are staying. The sources nevertheless pointed out that the indirect talks between the officers do not represent a substantive change in the ambassadors' channel format, which will continue to be the main channel."

[In the same report, correspondent Eytan Rabin quotes "a senior Israeli source" as saying last night that Chief of Intelligence Uri Sagi left with the chief of staff for Washington and is due back in Israel today. The head of the chief of staff's office is quoted as saying that to the best of his knowledge Baraq is in Israel. Nevertheless, the correspondent points out that "it has been confirmed by at least four senior Israeli sources" that Baraq left for Washington with Sagi.]

Syrians Said Taking Proposals 'Seriously'

TA2312121194 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1100 GMT 23 Dec 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Chief of staff Lieutenant General Ehud Baraq is on his way back to Israel after taking part in talks in Washington between Israel and Syria. Israeli sources said that the Syrians treated Israeli proposals seriously. David Ze'ev has more details:

[Ze'ev] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin now knows the Syrian response to Israel's security proposals presented earlier. The indication in Jerusalem is that the Syrians are taking the Israeli ideas seriously.

Israeli officials insist that the plans do not include specific lines—how far, for example, Israel would withdraw on the Golan Heights. Instead, there are important security issues in principle which, they say, must be resolved first. One issue cited is the size of a demilitarized zone. And, of course, Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin supports American troops on the Golan Heights as monitors. The Syrian preference for UN observers is an issue which might be as much, if not more, an issue of the Syrians working things out with the Americans as it is an Israeli-Syrian matter.

Friday is the day for the weekly meeting of the military establishment with Defense Minister Yitzhaq Rabin. On this day, Rabin and security officers are faced with considering the talks with Syria even as they also face the fighting in southern Lebanon which, Israel says, Syria could act against. American sources say the Syrians have committed to crack down—even if not enough to Israel's liking. Israel says it has been lowering its own profile gradually in southern Lebanon, though government officials continue to say they have not turned down any military operation's request for political reasons.

The open Syrian confirmation that the Washington contacts are taking place is viewed in Jerusalem as part of the Damascus policy discouraging secret talks—at least not giving the impression that talks are taking place secretly. It might be premature to say the Syrian announcement is an indication of progress.

Inter-Arab Affairs

Iraq Reportedly Seeking To Hold Talks With Egypt

JN2312115994 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 23 Dec 94 pp 1, 18

[FBIS Translated Text] Amman, AL-QUDS PRESS—Diplomatic sources in Amman yesterday said that Baghdad has informed the Egyptian Government that it wishes to send a high-level delegation led by Foreign Minister Muhammad Sa'id al--Sahhaf to Cairo to hold talks between the two parties with the aim of "resolving standing bilateral issues."

According to the diplomatic sources, the Iraqi Government proposed the end of this month as the date for the visit, which, if carried out, will be the first of its kind in four years.

The sources told journalists in Amman yesterday that Iraq "prefers this date for the Cairo visit so that its representatives can meet and hold talks with Arab League Secretary General 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid before he leaves on an expected tour to Kuwait and some Arabian Gulf States."

The same sources expect the Iraqi delegation to ask Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid to convey new proposals to the Kuwaiti Government on disputed issues, particularly the issues of Kuwaiti prisoners and missing persons in Iraq, as well as other proposals to the leaders of the Gulf states 'Abd-al-Majid will visit during his tour. According to the sources, which wished to remain anonymous, these proposals concern "Iraq's view of future relations with these states."

Al-Sahhaf met with Egyptian Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa during the seventh Islamic summit in Casablanca, Morocco. The same sources said that al-Sahhaf said his government is prepared to implement valuable ideas and proposals to improve ties between his country and the Gulf Cooperation Council member states.

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Observers in Amman told AL-QUDS PRESS that the Iraqi step aims at opening a new chapter in relations with the Arab Gulf states, which may pave the way for restoring even the minimum level of Arab solidarity.

The same sources notes that the Gulf states fear the recent Iranian moves in the region, which may convince these states that they need a strong Iraq."

Palestinian Affairs

'Arafat's Majority in Fatah Body Said Endangered

TA2212195094 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Hebrew 22 Dec

[Announcer-read report]

[FBIS Translated Text] Yasir 'Arafat is liable to lose the majority in the Fatah Central Committee in wake of the cooperation agreement between Abu-Mazin [Mahmud 'Abbas] and the Oslo accord opponents, our Arab affairs correspondent Ehud Ya'ari reports. He adds that 'Arafat announced a last-minute cancellation of a Fatah Central Committee meeting, which was scheduled to take place in Tunis, after he learned that he was liable to be presented with a majority demand to waive some of his powers and to incorporate the opposition into the self-rule.

'Arafat's opponents are against convening the meeting in Gaza.

Sa'ib Urayqat Reviews 'Arafat-Peres Meeting

JN2212165994 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 0830 GMT 22 Dec 94

[Telephone interview with Dr. Sa'ib 'Urayqat, minister of local government in the Palestinian Authority, by unidentified correspondent; place not given; from "Good Morning, Palestine" program—live]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Correspondent] Dr. Sa'ib 'Urayqat, good morning.

['Urayqat] Good morning.

[Correspondent] Yesterday, you took part in the meeting between His Excellency President Yasir 'Arafat and Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres. Is it enough for Peres to stress that Israel does not want to go back on the Oslo agreement?

['Urayqat] The issue is not whether he stresses or not; the issue is about an agreement that was concluded and signed in Washington in the presence of 182 states. That agreement is known as the Declaration of Principles [DOP]. True, this is not a peace agreement or treaty but a general framework for peace. However, We have recently noted that there was some gossip and Israeli statements on evading redeployment through proposing the principle of temporary or cosmetic redeployment, etcetera. It was stressed during this meeting that Israel should confirm its commitment to the DOP and its commitment not to ask for any amendment to this declaration especially as regards the redeployment. The Israeli foreign minister has stressed to His Excellency President 'Arafat that they are committed to the DOP and that they do not want or ask for any amendments to any clause in the DOP. I believe this is something good. Now, the talks have moved to substantive issues. These issues are represented in the swift implementation of the interim period. The interim period is made up of four elements. The first element is redeployment of the Israeli troops outside the populated areas in the West Bank, outside cities, villages, and camps. The Israeli troops should vacate all the populated areas. The departure and evacuation of the Israeli troops should not be reversed; it should be a one-way evacuation. Simultaneously, the Palestinian troops should be deployed. The second element is the revision of the current military laws and orders. Third, the transfer of powers. These three elements are basic to and will pave the way for conducting general elections in the Palestinian Authority's areas.

[Correspondent] Will these steps be taken simultaneously?

['Urayqat] Now, it was agreed that basic issues related to redeployment, security, and the transfer of powers will be discussed on the level of His Excellency President 'Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Rabin. As for elections, the delegation holding talks on elections will continue its work in Cairo. However, negotiations will be held in parallel. We cannot, under any circumstance, say that elections can be held without redeployment, revision of laws, and transfer of powers. These points were highlighted. Yesterday, another important issue was highlighted, that is, the issue of prisoners. The president raised the issue, considering it a priority. As you know, there is a committee in charge of this issue. However, it has not convened for a long time. The president called for including this issue on the talks agenda as soon as possible and stressed the need for the release of all prisoners, including female prisoners. I believe that in the next week a meeting will be held to discuss the release of prisoners. Moreover, yesterday it was agreed to hold a session for the higher liaison committee after all the outstanding issues of the Gaza-Jericho agreement have been identified. The meeting will be held before the end of this year, during the next week. It will discuss and solve all the outstanding issues of the DOP. Now, we do not say that all the problems were solved yesterday. We say that the peace process will press ahead along the track specified by the DOP agreement.

[Correspondent] Dr. Sa'ib, this means that fears surrounding the Oslo agreement have been removed.

['Urayqat] In fact, we are not talking about fears, but rather about an agreement that was signed. Talks that are being held are aimed at implementing not renegotiating it.

[Correspondent] But Peres proposes rediscussing some issues included in the Oslo agreement.

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['Urayqat] In fact, he did not propose rediscussing any issue. He said that they are committed to what they have signed and that they do not ask us to introduce any amendments. Therefore, the terms of reference for the pivotal issue of the Israeli troop withdrawal is represented in the implementation of the first stage as stipulated by the DOP. In the DOP there are two stages, the first is redeployment outside populated areas and holding elections, and the second stage comes after elections have been held and the elected council has been crowned. This is the track on which we proceed and this is what we have signed. We will continue negotiations to implement what was signed.

[Correspondent] So, next week in Cairo will witness important developments as regards the start of implementing the Oslo agreement.

['Urayqat] In fact, the eighth round of talks on elections will be held in Cairo next week. At the same time, meetings will be held between His Excellency President 'Arafat and the Israeli prime minister and his foreign minister to discuss the pivotal issues of redeployment, transfer of powers, and security issues. As I have said, these four issues will be discussed in parallel, because in the final analysis what should be reached and implemented is an agreement on the final implementation of the interim period.

[Correspondent] Dr. Sa'ib, you are in charge of the elections committee. Have you prepared ballot boxes?

['Urayqat] We have now prepared the places of 1500 ballot boxes. We have opened and prepared the regional electoral offices. The electoral law is ready. We have specified the constituencies. I believe we can say that 95 percent of the arrangements required from us on the internal level have been finalized. The remaining part will be accomplished soon. In addition, I would like to announce through Radio Palestine for the first time that the fundamental law of the Palestinian local government has been finalized and was yesterday referred to His Excellency President 'Arafat. As you know, local government—which is related to municipalities, governorates, and village councils—was based on the British law of 1934, which is still effective in Gaza, and Jordanian laws of 1955, which are still being implemented without any amendment in the West Bank along with the military orders. In fact, following strenuous efforts and a complete survey of the laws implemented in the current local government establishments, and in cooperation with legal experts and European Union countries, we have finalized the draft of local government law and referred it to President 'Arafat. We will put it before as many sons of our people as possible, including political factions, law faculties, intellectuals and administrative figures. A workshop will be held in the West Bank next month to debate this law and hear any amendment proposals. A similar workshop will be held in Gaza. We hope that by next month we would have formulated the first local government law in the history of the Palestinian people.

[Correspondent] Sa'ib 'Urayqat, are all Palestinian factions going to take part in the elections?

['Urayqat] Now we are talking about two separate types of elections. There are legislative elections of the Palestinian council emanating from the Oslo agreement. We heard from many political parties that they do not want to participate in these elections. Some political parties said they will not participate, others are still considering the issue, and some said they will take part. Local government elections are separate elections of municipal and village councils. I believe that all Palestinian factions said they will take part in these elections because they are related to purely services areas. We have to make a distinction between local government elections and legislative authority elections.

[Correspondent] Thank you Dr. Sa'ib 'Urayqat minister of local government in the National Authority.

['Urayqat] You are welcome.

Awqaf Minister on Jerusalem Issue, Liberation

MM2212122794 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 22 Dec 94 p 5

[Report by Khalid Jawdah: "Palestinian Awqaf Minister: Jerusalem Problem Is Not Difficult"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo—Palestinian Awqaf Minister Shaykh Hasan Tahbub has announced that he agrees with Israeli President 'Ezer Weizman that the Jerusalem problem is not "difficult," pointing out that the issue is clear, and Jerusalem is an Arab, Islamic city.

Tahbub said that Egypt's joining of the Jerusalem Committee represents a plus. He disclosed that Egypt's membership of the committee is not new, since Egypt has been on the Jerusalem Committee since the establishment of the Islamic summit conference, but it has been absent from the committee and has now returned to it. In his statement to AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT prior to his departure from Cairo for Riyadh the day before yesterday the awqaf minister denied the occurrence of any new opposition actions in the occupied territories. He pointed out that none of the Palestinian parties planned the isolated incidents that have occurred there, which are the work of foreign hands.

He said that the Islamic summit conference did justice to the Jerusalem issue and stressed the need to liberate it. He pointed out that the Palestinian issue is the Muslims' main issue which should not be overlooked because it is an Islamic issue.

Al-Rujub on Israeli Sovereignty Over East Jerusalem

TA2212175594 Jerusalem AL-QUDS in Arabic 22 Dec 94 pp 1, 22

[Report by special AL-QUDS correspondent]

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[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Jericho—Colonel Jibril al-Rujub, head of the West Bank Preventive Security Service, has stressed that the Palestinian side rejects all Israeli attempts and measures aimed at creating changes that infringe upon the inalienable and legitimate Palestinian right in Arab Jerusalem.

Commenting on a statement by Israeli Police Minister Moshe Shahal in which he considered Arab Jerusalem to be under Israeli sovereignty and that al-Rujub had no business there, al-Rujub said: "The thing that should be understood is that Arab Jerusalem is an integral part of the occupied territories that fell under the occupation on 5 June 1967. More than 150,000 Palestinians live there, Islamic and Christian holy shrines are located in it, and its lands are Arab lands. We have rejected and resisted all Israeli attempts that seek to create geographic, political, and demographic changes on these lands."

Al-Rujub added: "The return of Jerusalem to Palestinian sovereignty is the condition for achieving peace and stability in the Middle East. The power of force about which Moshe Shahal is talking does not nullify the power of Palestinian right of sovereignty over Arab Jerusalem."

Al-Rujub noted that the Israeli measures also contravene the Oslo agreement's provisions, which consider Jerusalem to be a major issue that will be negotiated in the final stage talks. This is an implicit acknowledgment of the inalienable Palestinian right in Arab Jerusalem.

Al-Rujub said: "The odd thing is that the Israelis are proposing jurisdiction over Jerusalem to Jordan and at the same time are trying to deprive the Palestinians, who have the legal right, of this jurisdiction. It seems that the Jordanian merchant is prepared to buy at any price and wear the Israeli size garb of jurisdiction." [passage omitted]

Islamic Leader Refutes Saudi Ruling on Israeli Peace

NC2212212594

[FBIS Editorial Report] Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Arabic at 1745 GMT on 22 December broadcasts within its "News and Reports" program a recorded six-minute telephone interview conducted by an unidentified radio correspondent with Shaykh 'Abd- al-'Aziz 'Awdah, "one of the senior Palestinian religious ulema." 'Awdah refutes a fatwa [religious ruling] by chief Saudi mufti 'Abd-al-'Aziz Bin-Baz in which he reportedly rules that peace with Israel is religiously permissible.

Shaykh 'Awdah sees "conclusive evidence" in the Koran that a "humiliating peace" with an enemy that occupies Muslim land is a religious taboo. "A peace that leads Muslims to humiliation is forbidden," he says. He asks: "How can one say that peace, as it is currently being made, is permissible when it enables the enemy to occupy the land of Muslims, and when it is based on oppression and aggression?" He notes that Muslim ulema have issued many fatwas on the impermissibility of peace with Israel.

Shaykh 'Awdah rejects Bin-Baz's reported analogy between peace with Israel and the peace that Prophet Muhammad had with the Jews in early Islam. He says: "The prophet concluded al-Hudaybiyah peace with the people of Mecca—his people and kinsfolk. That peace was concluded to avert a civil war. Moreover, the prophet concluded the peace from a position of strength." Shaykh 'Awdah adds that Muslims now are in a completely different situation, in which "the enemy occupied and established a state on Muslim land." In such a case, he concludes, "jihad is a duty of every Muslim in the world, male and female."

Expansion of Israeli Settlements a 'Contradiction'

TA2212182994 Jerusalem AL-QUDS in Arabic 22 Dec 94 p 13

[Editorial: "Between Words and Deeds"]

[FBIS Translated Text] At a time when intensive talks are taking place to activate implementation of the second stage of the Palestinian-Israeli Declaration of Principles [DOP], Israeli sources are talking about expansion of settlement activity inside Hebron. Israeli plans to expand the settlement of Ma'ale Adumim are also continuing, through the expropriation of more land owned by Arab residents, in a bid to absorb more settlers.

Undoubtedly, this sort of behavior creates a clear contradiction between the statements uttered by Israeli officials and what is taking place at the Palestinian-Israeli talks on one hand, and actual Israeli practices and conduct on the other hand. Logically, the Israeli side cannot talk about commitment to the peace agreements and the desire to implement them sooner or later, while at the same time being preoccupied not only by drawing up plans to expand settlements but also by actually implementing those plans.

Only a few short weeks and months have passed since the Israeli officials' statements about the possibility of evacuating the settlements in Hebron. On one hand, those settlements were considered to represent a security burden for Israel, and on the other to form a source of friction and tension between the settlers and the town's inhabitants. Instead of matters evolving toward the implementation of those statements, which is what all observers were expecting, now surprisingly the settlements will be expanded and the number of settlers increased instead of decreased.

As for the settlement of Ma'ale Adumim, the plans pertaining to it are basically associated with Israeli intentions and positions on Jerusalem. The Israeli goal was and continues to be the realization of territorial contiguity between the settlement and Jerusalem through the confiscation of tens of thousands of dunams owned by the residents of Arab villages surrounding the settlement and the subsequent construction of thousands of housing units in order to link this settlement with

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other settlement neighborhoods around Jerusalem. This, despite the fact that upon assuming power, the current Israeli Government declared a freeze on settlement activity. The world considered this declaration as a goodwill gesture by Israel toward peace. At the time, this declaration also led to lifting the U.S. loan guarantees embargo imposed on Israel by the administration of former President George Bush.

There is supposed to be harmony between Israeli statements about commitment to the agreements and the endeavor to invigorate the peace process on one hand, and Israeli practices and conduct on the ground on the other. This is because those practices are regarded as the real gauge of Israeli intentions, for in the final analysis the lesson is in deeds not words, regardless of how sweet and polished they might be.

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Algeria

Ambassador to Paris Says Situation 'Under Control'

LD2212203994 Paris Radio France International in French 1830 GMT 22 Dec 94

[Studio interview with Hocine Djoudi, the ambassador to Paris, by correspondent Jerome Bastion; date not given; from the "Afrique Soir" program—live or recorded]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted] [Bastion] How is the security situation now? Is there a real improvement?

[Djoudi] Definitely. I am in a position to affirm to you that the security situation has definitely improved, and the situation is under control. In fact the control of the situation is such that there is a progressive return of the country to normality.

This improvement of the security situation should not simply be seen as a result of the action of the security forces, but also as a result of the commitment of the population and its real mobilization, in addition to the spontaneous demonstrations being held by the population in all towns and villages against terrorism and violence. [passage omitted]

Security Forces Kill 10 'Terrorists' 18-20 Dec

LD2112203594 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1830 GMT 21 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] A communique issued by the security services today said that during the period last Sunday-Tuesday the security forces killed ten terrorists in Algiers, Constantine, and Chlef, including the amir of an armed group which used to be active in Chlef Province. His name is Nehal Salah, 40 years' old, whom the security services were looking for as he had committed several assassinations and terrorist operations. Among this terrorist group was a person called Touam Tarik, 17 years' old, who resided in Chlef. The security forces were able during these operations to retrieve a considerable quantity of weapons and ammunition.

Egypt

Al-Baz on Cooperation With U.S., Bosnian Crisis

NC2312112794 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1040 GMT 23 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Cairo, 23 Dec (MENA)—Dr Usamah al-Baz, Foreign Ministry first under secretary and director of the President's Office for Political Affairs, has stated that the United States is keen on developing and boosting cooperative relations with Egypt. Egypt shares this view because it serves the two countries' interests and promotes development and stability in the region.

On U.S. Vice President Al Gore's upcoming visit to Egypt in the middle of January, al-Baz said today in an interview with the television program "Good Morning, Egypt" that the visit is within the framework of enhancing cooperation between the two countries on a firm and constant basis that does not depend on specific circumstances, such as the peace process. He added that he welcomes the visit, affirming that Egypt is prepared to extend a bridge of cooperation to the United States on a long-term basis in order to increase Egyptian exports to the United States and enhance the scope of technical and cultural cooperation.

Al-Baz said Egyptian-U.S. cooperation does not cancel out the characteristics of both countries. The United States is not an Arab or Islamic country in the Middle East and is not part of the Third World. Egypt is not a country on the Atlantic Ocean and is not a European country but is a country with its own characteristics and priorities. He described relations between Egypt and the United States as good and based on cooperation in several areas. He indicated that both countries respect the characteristics and priorities of the other.

On the U.S. role in Bosnia, al-Baz said that the effective party in this crisis is Europe and not the United States. He said no one can directly deal with this crisis without coordinating and reaching an understanding with Europe. He added that, even if the United States tries to intervene militarily to resolve the crisis, this must be done in coordination with the countries of Europe. Political activity also must be carried out in unison with the European countries in view of the geographical aspects of the problem. He noted that the Russian role in the Bosnian crisis is important.

Dr. al-Baz described the U.S. stand on Bosnia as more advanced than the European stand, indicating that the European countries do not want foreign intervention and reject lifting the arms embargo on the Muslims while the United States agrees to lifting the embargo. [passage omitted]

Writer on Mideast Developments, Disputes With U.S.

NC2012124494 Cairo AL-AHALI in Arabic 14 Dec 94 p 2

[News analysis by Ahmad Sayyid Hassan: "Week of Contradictions in the Middle East; Accord Between Cairo and Damascus Expounds Egyptian-American Differences"]

[FBIS Translated Text] A few days after the conclusion of U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher's tour, which took him to Israel, Syria, and Gaza—the tour said to have failed to make any significant accomplishments—the Norwegian capital, Oslo, was the scene of celebrations by the Nobel Committee to hand 'Arafat, Rabin, and Peres the Nobel prize for peace.

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This double-sided image—Christopher's unproductive tour and the Nobel prize celebrations—reflect the confusion and disorder on the Middle East map and the negotiating process in which all parties join in a quest for peace.

As far as Christopher's tour is concerned, the first thing to be noted is that he did not stop in Cairo, contrary to his previous tours. Egypt is playing a central and vital role in the negotiating process and the direct and indirect contacts along the various tracks, particularly the Palestinian and Syrian, now that Jordan has opted to steer its own track with Israel and Lebanon, is linked to developments on the Syrian track.

Although Cairo had been informed that Christopher would not stop in Egypt this time, press campaigns in Cairo and Washington and exchanged criticism indicate that there is a growing Egyptian- American crisis, even if officials in both capitals try to insinuate a different thing.

Of the numerous points of dispute between Cairo and Washington, the disagreements on the remapping of the Middle East under the umbrella of peace seem to take the lead.

Washington believes that peace has actually been achieved, except for the remaining simple issue of Israel's withdrawal from the Golan Heights.

Supported by Damascus, Cairo believes that there are other issues to be negotiated before the Middle East file can be closed, primarily Israel's nuclear arsenal and the nature of the colossal economic projects being prepared and financed by major financial institutions with U.S. sponsorship. These projects seek to enable Israel to impose its economic control on the region, supported by major financial institutions and multinational corporations.

The issue is thus far bigger than Israel's withdrawal from the Golan, which al-Asad has repeatedly noted that his country is not in a hurry to restore, since it will sooner or later be returned. Al- Asad stressed that the point is to develop a peace formula that involves no possibility of an Israeli economic or military hegemony.

The talks Christopher held, as well as U.S. President Bill Clinton's quick trip to the region and his visit to Damascus, proved that the U.S. Administration is so far disinclined to lift Syria's name from the list of states that foster terrorism.

Moreover, the U.S. Administration ignores any Syrian or Egyptian role in the shaping of Gulf security. This was evident in the recent crisis. Reports indicate that the United States played a major role in aborting the Damascus Declaration. Accordingly, the task of defending Gulf security—an indispensable part of pan-Arab security—became the exclusive responsibility of the U.S. Administration, which views it as a strategic process with significant economic proceeds.

In this light we can understand Egypt's move westward and its request to join the Arab Maghreb Union as a further step toward enhancing its ties with Mediterranean European states. The latter wants to enhance these ties, particularly in view of the explosive regional problems, like the Lockerbie issue, the Polisario, and domestic stability and ending all extremist terrorist activity in Algeria and Egypt.

We can also understand why Christopher did not visit Cairo. The United States has repeatedly requested Egypt—the first state to conclude a peace agreement with Israel and who has strategic ties with the United States and gets $2.3 billion in assistance—to put pressure on Syria to accept the Israeli peace plan. Cairo and Damascus are convinced that this plan will weaken Syria's role and diminish its significance in the region and enhance the Israeli role, particularly in view of the Arab rush to normalize relations with Israel.

Although it was the first state to establish peace with Israel, Egypt feels that this rush will only weaken its Arab and regional role and give Israel the leading role in the region under the new arrangements.

Hence, Cairo decided that it will not put pressure on Syria. During a visit to Damascus last week, and after the 26th meeting with President al-Asad, President Mubarak announced that Egypt is fully satisfied with and backs the Syrian stance.

The second scene, the Nobel celebration, has failed to cover up the tragic conditions in the Gaza Strip. Conditions that reflect a retreat in world interest in the Palestinian cause.

At various celebrations, Israel and the United States succeeded in deluding the world into believing that the Palestinian issue has actually be solved. Israel made one gain after the other, while the Palestinian people are suffering from peace more than they did from the atrocities of occupation.

Although donor states have recently released some aid to the Palestinians, the funds are mere tranquilizers and pacifiers that will soon wear off.

The most important issue that Christopher failed to settle remains unresolved: the Palestinian elections. Israel procrastinates and refuses to set a date for redeployment in the West Bank to hold the elections that 'Arafat needs to rule on the basis of popular representation.

Unless this issue is resolved, elections are held, and Palestinian authority is extended to the entire West Bank, the Palestinian-Israeli agreement will be liable to collapse and the entire region will be open to a possible flare up once again.

Supported by the U.S. Administration, Israel does not want any step to be taken in that direction. The two agree on the need to weaken Syria, Egypt, and the Palestinian

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Authority by keeping them preoccupied with minor issues, while they manage major strategic issues in a manner that suits the defective balance of power.

Newspaper Criticizes U.S. Stance on Chechnya

NC2312073794 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0620 GMT 23 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 23 Dec (MENA)—The newspaper AL-AKHBAR criticizes the negative stance of the United States and the Western states on the situation in Chechnya. It says that although the current events in Chechnya are a flagrant aggression and an unjustified crime, the Western states led by the United States consider Russia's action an internal affair. Thus they have decided to close their eyes to the events in Chechnya, although they are in flagrant violation of the UN Charter.

In its comment today the newspaper says the Western states' negative stance will encourage Russian President Boris Yeltsin to carry out similar attacks against other independent republics, such as Azerbaijan, Tajikistan, and other Islamic regions.

The newspaper says the events in Chechnya are a carbon copy of the events in Bosnia. It says the Islamic world committed a grave mistake when it adopted a negative stance in April 1992 when the Serbian minority began its aggression against the Muslim majority in Bosnia. What we are afraid of is that the same behavior will be repeated in the Chechnya crisis.

Radio: 'Genuine' Normalization With Israel Needs Peace

NC2212151394 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1240 GMT 22 Dec 94

[Commentary by Muhammad Sharaf: "The Future of Middle East Relations in Light of the Israeli President's Visit to Egypt"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Everyone concerned with the current transformation in Middle East relations and the situation realizes full well a certain fact—a fact that should be given utmost consideration when considering this transformation. The fact is this: What is currently happening in the region will take a long time and much patience before relations and situations in the region can rest on firm and permanent foundations. This transformation needs not only time, but, primarily, broad agreement among all the Arab countries and Israel regarding the basis on which future relations must ultimately be built. It can be said generally that this primary issue was at the center of the talks between President Husni Mubarak and Israeli President 'Ezer Weizman during his official visit to Egypt over the past three days.

It was natural for the talks to focus on the three points that constitute the main components of that issue. The first of these points, according to official statements and remarks about the talks, was how to advance the peace process and produce the necessary climate for its success. The second point was how each side viewed future relations and the situation in the region. The third point was bilateral relations between Egypt and Israel—their current status and how to promote them.

Regarding the advancement of the peace process, no one disagrees that, for this objective to be realized, Israel should abandon many of its current positions concerning the negotiations with the Syrians and the Palestinians. [passage omitted]

Concerning the second point—how the Arabs and the Israelis view the future of relations and situations in the region—there should be agreement and a commitment that these relations and situations must be based on good neighborliness and cooperation for mutual benefit, without any attempt by any party to use the others, either directly or indirectly. Arab-Israeli relations, under the shadow of peace, must be based on equality and fairness.

In regard to the third point on the Egyptian-Israeli summit talks; that is, the current status and the future of Israeli- Egyptian relations, there is normalization between the two countries and an official commitment to this normalization. There are no problems regarding the implementation of the peace treaty between the two sides. But normalization in its genuine sense cannot be established unless a just and comprehensive peace is achieved, peace that is acceptable without reservation to both sides—their governments and peoples alike. It is clear that transformation in the Middle East requires a long time, great patience, painstaking efforts, and, above all, the sincere intent to coexist and cooperate.

Minister Speaks at Ceremony for New Commander

NC2212172094 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1452 GMT 22 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 22 Dec (MENA)—Field Marshal Muhammad Husayn Tantawi, commander in chief of the Armed Forces and minister of defense and war production, attended a celebration today to transfer the commandership of the Third Field Army from Staff Major General Kamal 'Amir to Staff Major General Muhammad Fu'ad Jalal.

Field Marshal Tantawi delivered a speech in which he stressed that the role of the Armed Forces is more difficult during peacetime than during war. Keeping the highest level of combatant readiness safeguards our national security, he said.

Tantawi added: We are working to protect peace by bolstering our military cooperation with many countries, developing our weapons and diversifying sources, and producing our own war materiel. This will enable us to create the balances necessary to confront any challenges that may be imposed on us or obstruct our march.

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He said the Armed Forces' ability to perform their duties lies in the good preparation of fighters in terms of patriotism and fighting. This, he said, must be the chief concern of commanders.

Musa, Cuban Foreign Minister Comment After Talks

NC2212155794 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1500 GMT 22 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa and Cuban Foreign Minister Roberto Robaina held a news conference at the end of their official talks today. Musa said the Cuban minister's visit to President Mubarak yesterday and the talks he held today dealt with some aspects of the relations between Egypt and Cuba, the Nonaligned Movement, and various world developments. He said an executive program for the cultural agreement between Egypt and Cuba was signed to support bilateral ties in this area. It was also agreed to boost cooperation in the economic, commercial, and agricultural fields, Musa said.

The Cuban foreign minister said his visit to Egypt reflects an appreciation of Egypt's role in the Arab region. He said his talks in Egypt seek to promote relations between the two countries. He said he sensed great potential for cooperation in all areas.

Cuban Foreign Minister Departs

NC2312112894 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1015 GMT 23 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 23 Dec (MENA)—Cuban Foreign Minister Roberto Robaina left Cairo this morning at the end of a two-day visit to Egypt. The Cuban minister conveyed a message to President Husni Mubarak from Cuban President Fidel Castro. The message dealt with ways of promoting relations between the two countries.

During the visit, the Cuban minister held talks with Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa about the situation in Cuba, international issues of mutual concern, and developments in the Middle East peace process.

Mauritanian Minister Departs After Visit

NC2212165394 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1435 GMT 22 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 22 Dec (MENA)—Mohamed Salem, Mauritanian minister of state for foreign affairs, left Cairo this afternoon after a visit of several hours. In a predeparture statement, he said that he conveyed to President Mubarak a message from his brother Mauritanian President Ould Sid'Ahmed Taya on fraternal ties between the two countries and issues of common concern to the Arab and Islamic worlds. He said that President Mubarak gave him a reply for the Mauritanian president.

Sudan

Minister Explains Reason for Dispute With Eritrea

JN2212195494 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 21 Dec 94 pp 1, 4

[Report by Kamal Hamid in Khartoum and Iskandar al-Dik in Bonn]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Sudan has accepted Yemeni President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih's initiative to join a security committee with Eritrea. The committee will hold a meeting in Sanaa to resolve differences between Asmara and Khartoum. 'Umar Yusuf Brido, under secretary of the Sudanese Foreign Ministry, made this statement at a news conference in Khartoum yesterday. [passage omitted]

In a statement to AL-HAYAH in Bonn, 'Ali al-Hajj, Sudanese minister of bureau of federal government, said that the problem of Eritrean refugees in Sudan is the cause of the Eritrean-Sudanese dispute. He said: We hosted more than 1.5 million refugees at the beginning of the Eritrean liberation struggle against Ethiopia until the Eritrean revolution achieved victory. The Eritrean Government only allowed the loyal elements to return to their country. Now, there are two problems: First, if the rest of the refugees return to their country the government fears that the political balance of power will change because these refugees would join the opposition. However, this is their problem. The second problem is that the 500,000 refugees will become an economic burden on their country. If the Eritrean Government says that we are training those people against it this is incorrect because they are already trained. The solution is to talk with them to bring them back to their country, the Sudanese minister said. [passage omitted]

Measures Taken To Protect Sites Near Eritrea

JN2212203594 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 20 Dec 94 pp 1, 4

[Report by Kamal Hamid in Khartoum and Hasan Sandarusi in Washington]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Information received from eastern Sudan yesterday indicates that the Sudanese Government has embarked on measures to protect strategic installations and government facilities in areas close to Eritrea. In the first response to Eritrea's decision to sever ties with Sudan, Khartoum regarded the Eritrean move as a link in the plot against the Sudanese nation and its cultural orientation.

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The al-Qadarif province in the eastern part of the country adjoining the border with Eritrea recently witnessed visits by high- ranking Sudanese officials. Brigadier General Bakri Hasan Salih, adviser to the Sudanese president for foreign and domestic security agencies told a delegation from al-Qadarif yesterday that the "recent developments in the Sudanese-Eritrean relations are a link in the plot against the Sudanese nation." He added that his government is eager to maintain good relations with neighboring states. He lauded "citizens' great response to the government's call for military training, something which confirms their adherence to the government's course."

Information Minister 'Abd-al-Basit Sabdarat said that the Yemeni President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih's mediation between Sudan and Eritrea is a "step which found special appreciation among the Sudanese." He said that the Yemeni-Sudanese ministerial committee which starts meetings in Sanaa today "will discuss this initiative."

Kassala Governor Major General Abu-al-Qasim Ibrahim Muhammad said that the crisis with Eritrea "came within international alliances targeting Islam and Sudan." He indicated that there is no disagreement between the two countries' interests, pointing out that last year witnessed the signing of eight agreements in the fields border, smuggling, security, trade, and movement of citizens. He added: "We did not begin the hostility, but we will prepare for countering any attack and repulsing any aggression from any source." [passage omitted]

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Paper Sees Wider Dangers in Bahrain Unrest

MM2212141994 London AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI in Arabic 21 Dec 94 p 11

[Editorial: "Bahrain Incidents and Their Extension To Neighbors"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The demonstrations and violent actions that have dominated Bahrain over the past week are a small example of what could dominate the Gulf region as a whole in the days ahead as a result of some governments' disregard of the economic and social crises resulting from negligence, repressive policies, and the split between those at the peak of power and those at the bottom.

It is no coincidence that Bahrain is the first site for the explosion. Because social and economic contradictions have ripened there, and its people have had enough of the authorities' practices, the neighbors' pressures, deteriorating economic conditions, discrimination, lack of freedoms, and media falsification, which have become deep-rooted in a society which has an old civilization and its advanced democratic experiments.

Bahrain's crises are an integral part of the crises of the Gulf region as a whole. Oil revenues have dropped to less than $94 billion in the past two years, that is less than half of the previous figures. And the U.S. war against Iraq consumed over $150 billion in cash, most of which were spent on buying surplus old U.S. and Western weapons not needed by the states concerned and their armies after the end of the Cold War and the withdrawal of most U.S. forces from their bases in West Europe.

As a free zone and a principal banking center, Bahrain has been harmed more than anyone else by this war, as deposits have decreased, money transactions have declined, and the aid which it used to receive from states like the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the big financial sponsor of its economy and annual budget, has dropped. As the kingdom has reduced its declared annual budget by 40 percent in the past year and for next year, it is natural for Bahrain, which is linked to it by the "Amity Causeway," to be harmed.

Everyone agrees that the imbalance in the population structure—in the government's view—is one of the causes of recent troubles, which cannot be dissociated completely from the sectarian dimension. But for its part, the government has over the past decade failed to take any corrective steps to tackle this imbalance or to give precedence to national identity over sectarian identity. There are numerous steps which can be taken in this connection, most notably halting the arrest campaigns and the mass expulsion of oppositionists, who are prevented from returning to the country. Bahrain is the only Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC] state denying its sons the right to return, even to prison.

It is also the only state pursuing the policy of forcible expulsion against its citizens who differ politically with their government.

A little bit of democracy and equality in employment and social and economic development is capable of absorbing the indignation and easing the severity of the social and sectarian tension—even partially—and thus of closing the door to the alleged foreign interference that the government consistently talks about in its statements.

What the Bahraini Government is unable to understand these days is that the recent troubles will have catastrophic effects on the country's economy and the quality of its services. As is known, stability is a main factor for the continuation of an active banking system in Bahrain. It is also an important factor for tourism and transit trade. Without this stability both capital and tourists would escape, since the alternative exists and is ready in Dubai, which has—gradually and intelligently—pulled the rug from under its Gulf neighbors through what it is offering, namely financial facilities, free zones, an advanced Western banking system, and tourist services better than those in Bangkok, Manila, Paris, and London.

The GCC leaders, who have held their summit in Bahrain over the past two days, must have thoroughly examined the incidents, their causes, and their meanings. This is because the social and sectarian structures which exist in Bahrain also exist in most of the other states. Perhaps the United Arab Emirates is the state most likely to experience similar explosions—probably more severe and serious—because of the infiltration operations and the difficulty of controlling them, and also because of the worsening of its dispute with Iran over the islands question.

The Gulf states need to responsibly and thoroughly reexamine all their internal and external policies. Their "imaginary" victory over Iraq has not protected them internally. In fact it could turn into a disaster if they do not try to extricate themselves from the whirlpool of Kuwaiti spite in which they have drowned.

If the danger is threatening the Gulf states' identity, as indicated by the Bahraini Government's statements and those of its information minister, Arab reconciliation is the useful way to speedily tackle the danger. Continuing to pursue the official convulsive Kuwaiti policies is the real recipe for an approaching big catastrophe.

Border Problems Among GCC States 'Dealt With'

LD2112184594 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 1727 GMT 21 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Manama, 21 Dec—Bahraini Foreign Minister Shaykh Muhammad Bin-Mubarak Al Khalifah announced in a news conference at the end of the 15th Gulf summit today that the border problems among the Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC] countries have "been dealt with."

The Bahraini foreign minister stressed that the "border issues have received much examination and study in the

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summit which dealt with all issues, whether easy or difficult." He pointed out that the GCC leaders "have decided and agreed to deal with all the issues, including their treatment within the Gulf community and within the bilateral framework."

He noted that the summit communique has urged the need to reach final solutions for the problems before the date of the forthcoming summit.

Bahrain

Opposition Group Describes Continuing Clashes

NC2212165294 Paris AFP in English 1436 GMT 22 Dec 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Dec 22 (AFP)—Clashes between security forces and demonstrators are continuing in Bahrain and have spread to several more towns in the Gulf state, an opposition group said Thursday [22 December].

The banned Islamic Front for the Liberation of Bahrain (IFLB) said that riots were going on in Sanabis, Bilad al-Qadim and Sitrah.

"The number of arrests has exceeded 1,600," the Lebanon-based group said, adding that Moslem clerics had been especially targeted.

Quoting witnesses, the IFLB said the number of wounded was rising but hospitals had "orders not to admit them."

Violence erupted in Bahrain last week when hundreds of Shiite Moslems held protests to demand the release of Shiite cleric Shaykh 'Ali Salman, who was arrested after calling for the restoration of parliament, suspended in 1975.

It is the worst violence Bahrain has seen since it became independent in 1971.

Opposition Leader: Uprising To Continue

NC2212184394 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Arabic 1730 GMT 22 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Shaykh Muhammad 'Ali Mahfuz, secretary general of the Islamic Front for the Liberation of Bahrain, announced today that the uprising of the Bahraini people will continue until the authorities agree to arrange general parliamentary elections.

In an interview conducted by the French News Agency in Beirut, Shaykh Mahfuz said the recent disturbances, in which nine people were killed, were a result of the ruling family's refusal to restore democratic life in Bahrain.

[AFP at 1812 GMT on 22 December in a Nicosia-datelined report adds the following:

["In Beirut, IFLB leader Shaykh Muhammad 'Ali Mahfuz demanded that the authorities agree to hold elections, saying the uprising was due to 'the ruling family's refusal to restore democratic life.'

["The country's national assembly was dissolved by the ruling amir 'Isa Bin-Salman Al Khalifah in 1975, four years after the Gulf archipelago gained its independence.

["Mafhuz maintained that Saudi forces were helping Bahrain crush the protests and that an anti-riot squad made up of Pakistanis and Jordanians and headed by a British reserve officer had been put together.

["The IFLB secretary general said he was coordinating with other opposition groups whether Sunni or Shiite."]

Kuwait

Police Officer Gets Life for Collaborating With Iraq

NC1812133594 Paris AFP in English 1301 GMT 18 Dec 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Kuwait City, December 18 (AFP)—A Kuwaiti police officer has been sentenced to life imprisonment for collaborating with Iraqi secret services during the 1990-1991 occupation of the emirate, legal officials told AFP Sunday [18 December].

Khalid Sahar al-Khalidi, 40, was found guilty after a three-year trial before the state security court here, a court official said.

Khalid faced several charges including joining the Iraqi popular army, a militia active during the seven-month occupation, and taking regular wages from the Iraqis, the official added.

He also criticised Kuwaiti Emir Shaykh Jabir al-Ahmad al-Sabah in public, which is forbidden under the Kuwaiti constitution.

The official said the defendant denied all charges, but more than 20 witnesses testified before the court that he was guilty.

Hundreds of defendants, mostly Palestinians, Iraqis and stateless Arabs, have been tried on similar charges since a US-led coalition ousted Iraqi troops from Kuwait in February 1991.

Yemen

Salih Meets Sudanese Official, Comments on Mediation

JN2212205994 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 2000 GMT 22 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Brother Lieutenant General 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih, president of the republic, together with Prime Minister brother 'Abd-al-'Aziz 'Abd-al-Ghani, received at the Presidential Palace in Aden today brother Major General al-Zubayr Muhammad Salih, the first vice president of sisterly Sudan, and members of the

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Sudanese side to the Higher Yemeni-Sudanese Joint Committee. The committee held its meetings in our country from 20-22 December 1994. The Sudanese official conveyed to the brother president a message from his brother Lieutenant General 'Umar Hasan al-Bashir, president of the Republic of Sudan. During the meeting, discussions dealt with aspects of the brotherly relations between the two countries and expanding the scopes of cooperation in light of the results of the meetings of the Yemeni-Sudanese Joint Committee and the agreements that have been reached. The two sides expressed their interest in bolstering bilateral ties and in advancing them in a manner compatible with the aspirations of the two brotherly peoples. They also discussed many regional, Arab, Islamic, and international issues of joint interest, chiefly developments in the Horn of Africa and the Red Sea.

The Sudanese vice president presented the brother president with a souvenir as an expression of the deep brotherly relations between the two countries.

The meeting was attended by a number of brother officials and members of the Sudanese delegation.

In a statement to Yemeni and Sudanese media after the meeting, brother Lt. Gen President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih expressed great satisfaction with the results reached by the Yemeni-Sudanese Joint Committee. He stressed that those results will reflect positively on relations between the two sisterly countries. The brother president indicated that he will visit Sudan early next year to attend the Sudanese people's Independence Day celebrations. He added that the visit will be a distinguished one and will give a new boost to bilateral relations.

On our country's mediation between the brothers in Sudan and Eritrea, the brother president hoped that the Yemeni efforts to resolve the existing disagreement between the two countries will reach a successful conclusion. He said that a security committee from both Sudan and Eritrea is expected to arrive in Yemen. He expressed confidence that the two sides will be able to resolve their disagreement.

At the conclusion of his statement, the brother said that work is underway to implement the [words indistinct] government which was endorsed by the House of Representatives.

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'Aziz Assails Saudi, Kuwaiti Rulers, GCC Communique

JN2312125894 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic 1130 GMT 23 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Deputy Prime Minister Tariq 'Aziz today said that the communique issued by the Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC] states' meeting regarding the position on Iraq requires a responsible stand not only by Iraq but also by the Arab and other states that are truly eager to entrench security, stability, and normal relations in the Gulf region.

'Aziz added: Despite the positive initiatives and steps that Iraq took toward Kuwait and other Gulf states, and despite Iraqi leader President Saddam Husayn's call for opening a new chapter, and despite Iraq's recognition of Kuwait and the borders demarcated by the United Nations, some GCC states, particularly Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, are still instigating evil and hostility and applying pressure designed to effect bad statements and positions such as the recent communique issued by the GCC meeting.

'Aziz continued: This communique literally reiterates the U.S. position, which is a tendentious position and which is now isolated from the international community's position. This sheds light on many facts regarding the events and positions that led to and followed August 1990. The content of this communique proves that the Saudi and Kuwaiti rulers do not seek regional peace and stability, and that they are not interested in establishing normal relations among the regional states. This is because their real policy is to serve the U.S. objectives in terms of spreading instability in the region in order to justify the U.S. military occupation of the region and to loot its resources in collusion with the rulers of these two states.

'Aziz said that many people inside and outside the region know that the attitude of the communique issued by the Manama meeting does not reflect the views of all Gulf states or their citizens. This communique also flagrantly conflicts with the general Arab will to establish normal relations among the Arab states in order to secure the minimum level of coordination to address the serious challenges facing the Arab nation.

'Aziz added: The rulers of Riyadh and Kuwait are totally and fundamentally responsible for this stupid policy, which will maintain the current deteriorating situation in the Gulf region and the Arab arena in general.

Ex-Intelligence Chief Possession of CBW Bombs

MM2312121694 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 23 Dec 94 p 2

[Unattributed report: "Iraqi Commander Stresses Baghdad's Possession of Germ Bombs"]

[FBIS Translated Text] London, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT—An Iraqi commander who has moved to the "liberated area" in North Iraq has stressed that the regime in Baghdad is still in possession of hundreds of germ bombs designed to be dropped by aircraft, and that it still has scores of Scud and al-Husayn missiles.

This came in an "open letter" from Staff Major General Wafiq al-Samarra'i to Rolf Ekeus, head of the UN committee entrusted with dismantling Iraqi mass destruction weapons. Al-Samarra'i was speaking in his capacity as a former military intelligence chief in Iraq who had thorough knowledge of the mass destruction weapons situation early in May 1991.

In the letter, which was carried by the Iraqi (opposition) Broadcasting Corporation, al-Samarra'i said that more than 10 long-range missile launchers emerged intact from the war. He added: "Current oil exports cover double the value of the inhabitants' ration card, but nevertheless, only little is offered to the people, the objective being to use this as an excuse [to influence] the international position [as regards the lifting of the sanctions]. We appeal to you in the name of human values to compel Saddam to refrain from oppressing the people, to send observers to monitor the nonexistent human rights in Baghdad, to force Saddam to comply with the resolution concerning exporting some quantities of oil, and to ensure thorough UN supervision of the process of buying and distributing food and medicines to the people."

MENA on Inter-Kurdish Fighting in North

NC2312113194 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1000 GMT 23 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 23 Dec (MENA)—Reports from north Iraq today indicate that fighting continues between gunmen from the Kurdistan Democratic Party [KDP] led by Mas'ud al-Barzani and those from the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan [PUK] led by Jalal Talabani. The reports say that the fighting is taking place in Raniyah, 30 km northeast of al-Sulaymaniyah governorate in north Iraq.

According to the reports, this morning for the third time al-Barzani and Talabani made two, urgent appeals to their gunmen to stop the fighting that broke out two days ago. However, it is not certain yet whether the gunmen have heeded the appeals.

The reports say that the officials in north Iraq have been shrouding the fighting with secrecy and are trying to contain the explosive situation, which the reports describe as serious and portending grave consequences if all efforts to resolve it fail.

The Kurdish parties in north Iraq, particularly the KDP and PUK, signed a document in October prohibiting fighting. However, this document was annulled three months later.

KDP, PUK Said To Differ Over Financial Affairs

JN2312135194 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 20 Dec 94 pp 1, 4

[Report by Zuhayr Qusaybati]

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[FBIS Translated Text] London—A spokesman for the Kurdistan Democratic Party [KDP], led by Mas'ud Barzani, has denied that clashes erupted in northern Iraq between this party and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan [PUK], led by Jalal Talabani. He asserted, however, that the differences between both parties continued over depositing the customs duties and funds, estimated in the millions of dollars, in the accounts of the Iraqi Kurdistan Government.

Muhammad Ma'ruf, spokesman for the KDP in London, told AL-HAYAH that the differences over the customs duties will not lead to renewed fighting with the Talabani party. Meanwhile, Kurdish circles estimated the customs duties levied at the Ibrahim al-Khalil border point with Turkey at more than $100,000 a day. The spokesman described the differences as technical, saying that there is no intention whatsoever to escalate the situation and that the problem can be resolved.

The spokesman reiterated the Barzani party's commitment to the agreements signed with the Talabani party, indicating that the differences over the financial revenues are not only linked to the Ibrahim al-Khalil border point's duties but also include wide files. He said the issue began with the coup on 1 May 1994. When the PUK forces attacked the Kurdish Government institutions, they took all the reserve funds, estimated at millions of dollars, from the Central Bank's branch in Kurdistan. They also took deposits from the al-Sulaymaniyah Bank, in addition to the PUK's monthly revenues from the cement factory in Sirchinar.

Kurdish sources told AL-HAYAH that the failure to hand the Kurdish Government the customs duties levied by the KDP at the Ibrahim al-Khalil border point is one of the factors that will return the tense atmosphere to the Kurdish areas in northern Iraq. The sources, however, indicated that there is concern for not aggravating the situation.

It is worth noting that the fighting between the two parties broke out in May and was also joined by the Islamic Movement. The Talabani and Barzani parties recently reached a new alliance agreement to resolve all problems between them.

'Absurd' Peres Suggestion to Join Arab League Seen

JN2212151094 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1035 GMT 22 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 22 Dec (INA)—The Iraqi newspaper BABIL has criticized some Arab regimes which are responsible for the current state of affairs that made Shim'on Peres, foreign minister of the Zionist entity, dare to ask that his entity join the Arab League.

In an article today, the paper says Peres knows very well that the League is exclusively for the Arabs, in accordance with its charter, structure, and functions, and that the Zionist entity in Palestine has no link whatsoever to Arabism.

The paper adds that this new Zionist stand shows the Zionist conviction that some Arab regimes do not differ much from the Zionist entity in their way of thinking, behavior, and appearance. Thus, Peres saw no absurdity in his request.

BABIL asks: Has the situation in the region reached such an absurd level for the Zionist entity to take lightly the feelings and sanctities of the Arabs and seek to hurt their pan-Arab dignity by making such a absurd request?

On 20 December, Shim'on Peres, foreign minister of the Zionist entity, asked that his entity join the Arab League to have the flag of his entity raised over the League building.

Writer Views Clinton's Changing Positions

JN2112162494 Baghdad AL-JUMHURIYAH in Arabic 17 Dec 94 pp 1, 2

["Standpoint" column by Salah al-Mukhtar: "After the Republican Elephant Victory and Democratic Donkey Defeat, Will Clinton's Chopping and Changing Save Him?"]

[FBIS Translated Text] U.S. President Bill Clinton did not wait long to jump from the back of his democratic (donkey) and ride on the republican (elephant). He did so shortly after the Republican victory in the Congress and state elections, something that has amazed the (elephants) while the (donkeys) could not, as usual, understand what was going on.

So the reader does not think that I want to insult the Democratic Party by linking it with the donkey or the Republican Party by linking it with the elephant, I would like to explain that the Democratic Party's official insignia is the donkey, while the Republican Party official insignia is the elephant. Both parties are proud of belonging to the symbols of their insignias. Therefore, our remarks are not meant to slander or insult.

Why were the (elephants) amazed while the poor (donkeys) failed to understand? The major difference between the Republicans and Democrats in their electoral campaigns was based on domestic issues and on increasing or reducing the income of the average citizen. The Republican tendency is to ease taxes imposed on the average citizen and increase his income, while the Democrats lean toward increasing taxes, thus increasing the citizen's economic weakness and increasing the wealth of the rich. Differences over foreign issues center on whether to give priority to foreign policy, particularly foreign aid, or to domestic policy, particularly alleviating poverty and reducing medical and other expenses from which the middle class suffers, by diverting foreign aid to support domestic aid.

After their failure in the presidential elections and Clinton's ascendancy, the Republicans concentrated on the slogans that secured Clinton's victory. These slogans were based on giving less attention to foreign policy in

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favor of domestic problems. In this context, the Republicans have backed the most important domestic American demand, that is, the alleviation of taxes as well as the most popular American demand, that is, the reduction or cancellation of foreign financial aid. With this, they won a dazzling victory.

The Democratic (donkey's) platform vizualized increasing taxes to finance the very expensive health care program as well as its aggressive foreign policy. So, the Republican's (elephant's) victory was a strong blow to all Clinton's programs and ambitions and dreams. This blow has made him believe that it would be impossible for him to win new presidential term without changing face or adopting his opponent's policy. Therefore, we saw him yesterday cut the donkey's ears and fix the elephant's trunk on his face in order to win the support of the Congress and secure a new term when he announced a series of measures focused on tax reduction for the middle class.

What are the implications of this sudden jump? Above all, Clinton's jump stressed that the American settlers, after 200 years of American independence, are unable to accept the idea of making any sacrifices for the sake of a nation that is in the process of establishment or for the sake of vital interests abroad. They only accept benefits, comfort, and luxury.

Based on this, we can see that presidents, congressmen, and state governors may abandon their platforms, promises, and convictions to appease the settlers, who vote for the one who will provide them with the most benefits and least difficulties. This situation prompted the American-Zionist Professor Edward Lutwalk [name as transliterated] to propose the establishment of a mercenary foreign army corps to implement America's aggressive policies after it has been proven that the Vietnam complex is still deep-rooted in the American mind.

Another implication of Clinton's clumsily calculated jump, is that the American Administration will be obliged to rethink its foreign policy, especially as regards foreign aid. There is increasing popular pressure to cancel this aid and earmark it for the poor and middle classes in America where more than 30 million people live below the poverty line. This rethinking also includes giving more attention to avoiding America's involvement in heated world crises that may squander its depleting wealth and expose its sons to many dangers.

American mass media have openly started to talk about this issue. This orientation was best manifested in the statements of Newt Gingrich, the new speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives. This orientation forces the Clinton Administration to go back on many of its foreign obligations, thus increasing dangers facing the American international role, especially after the start of a new Russian awakening aimed at restoring the Russian international role and curbing the U.S. role in various areas.

The implications are quite many and an article such as this cannot deal with them all. Therefore, I would only ask two questions. First, are Clinton's calculations, when he reversed his positions, capable of achieving success? Second, how are we going to be affected by this? To answer the first question, we refer to the Republican's welcoming of Clinton's turnabout. However, we should highlight a significant deduction, that is, Clinton's change proves the correctness of the (elephant's) policy and the wrongness of the (donkeys) basic policy. This gives rise to another question over the competence of Clinton to rule America, after it was proven that he swiftly changes his basic and secondary positions. Based on this deduction, Clinton's value will deteriorate after this change.

The answer to the second question can be summed up in the following: The Republicans will restrict Clinton's foreign policy. Conservative Republicans, particularly, will weaken Clinton's policy in our region and deprive him of honoring his promises of "building a paradise where honey flows, deserts bloom, and salt water is made fresh," which he made during his recent visit to Jordan, Palestine, Egypt, and Syria. So, he will be the first victim of this major Republican coup and of his own coup, which took place as an echo to it, represented by the so-called Middle East order. This order is still paper-bound, because local and world capital is coward and seeks guaranteed profits. This capital believes that the region is unstable so it will not take the risk of entering the region before it has become stable, something which will not be realized so long as the Arab's pan-Arab and national rights are usurped.

Another observation is that Clinton will find himself facing additional domestic and foreign pressures as regards the embargo imposed on Iraq. Iraq's steadfastness and its implementation of Security Council resolutions have led to the emergence of world and regional shifts, practically terminating the international coalition against Iraq and paving the way for other options that would lead to lifting the economic embargo in the foreseeable future. Therefore, Clinton's attempts to perpetuate the embargo have become very costly to his administration and to America. Irrespective of the Republican's intentions and those of the Clinton administration, interests will override any other consideration. The overwhelming majority of the world is in favor of lifting the embargo. This will put America in heated confrontations with every state that has an economic and strategic interest in having the embargo lifted. With this, the embargo imposed against Iraq would become an internal or almost internal American issue if it should last for long.

Finally, we must ask: Can one avoid a clear deduction, that is, Clinton is the most light-weighted American president, contrary to what the U.S. media used to claim during the electoral campaign? This makes him just like a chameleon, changing his skin and shape every time he is under pressure.

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Clinton's serious problem, which will cause him to be forgotten within two years, is that he enjoys a miraculous ability to change his ideas, despite the fact that he belongs to the party of (donkeys), which are slow in understanding and changing. So, is the Democratic Party going to replace its insignia of the (donkey) with that of the (chameleon) in order to make its form compatible with its content? Or are the (donkeys) going to kick out the chameleon out of respect for traditions established hundreds of years ago?

Speaker Meets With Russian Charge d'Affaires

JN2212163794 Baghdad INA in English 1410 GMT 22 Dec 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Baghdad, Dec 22, INA—Speaker of the National Assembly Sa'di Mahdi Salih today met here with the Russian charge d'affaires in Baghdad.

During the meeting, Mr. Salih received a message from Speaker of the Russian Parliament Ivan Rickin handed by the Russian charge d'affaires.

Allied Use of Kuwaiti, Saudi Facilities Protested

1-9 Dec 'Violations' Reported

JN1412090894 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0750 GMT 14 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 14 Dec (INA)—Iraq has informed the Arab League that the Saudi and Kuwait rulers continue to provide facilities to U.S., British, and French aircraft in their violations of the Iraqi airspace which threaten Iraq's security, sovereignty, and national unity.

In a letter addressed yesterday to the Arab League secretary general, Iraq's permanent envoy said that between 1 and 9 December, these aircraft continued to violate the Iraqi airspace and conducted 575 hostile sorties out of bases in Saudi Arabia and Kuwait.

The Iraqi envoy included a list detailing these violations.

10-17 Dec Sorties

JN2012111694 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1010 GMT 20 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 20 Dec (INA)—Iraq has once again protested to the Arab League General Secretariat against the facilities provided by Saudi Arabia and Kuwait to U.S., British, and French aircraft violating Iraqi airspace, noting that this constitutes a serious threat to Iraq's security, sovereignty, and national unity.

In a letter to Arab League Secretary General Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al- Majid, Iraq's permanent delegate noted that between 10-17 December, U.S., British, and French aircraft violated Iraqi airspace, taking off from their bases in Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, mounting 332 aggressive sorties.

The delegate asked that the Arab states be informed of the regrettable facts included in the letter and the enclosed list of violations.

U.S. Aircraft 'Violations' Protested to UN

JN2312105394 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0950 GMT 23 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] New York, 23 Dec (INA)—Iraq has once again protested to the United Nations against U.S. aircraft violations of Iraq's airspace with the aim of provocation and surveillance.

In a protest memorandum addressed to UN Secretary General Dr. Butrus Ghali yesterday, Iraq's permanent UN representative said these aircraft violated Iraq's airspace 11-20 December by carrying out 724 hostile air sorties, in addition to several reconnaissance sorties.

Iraq's permanent representative requested that the memorandum be distributed as a Security Council document.

Ration Card 'Decisive Reply' to 'Enemy Schemes'

JN2212163294 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0930 GMT 22 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 22 Dec (INA)—AL-QADISIYAH has asserted that the ration card system, planned and supervised by President Saddam Husayn, shall remain the Iraqis' precautionary, strategic measure and decisive reply to enemy schemes that seek to starve and humiliate the people.

In an article today on the precautionary decision made three months ago—organizing the quantities of the items of the ration card—and on the recent reinclusion of these items, the paper, which is specialized in military affairs, says the decision was wise and bold and one of the foremost requirements for overcoming the crisis. The decision has enabled the Iraqis to make considerable progress in this stage, at a time when the U.S. devil and its assistants are wagering on procrastination to prolong the blockade. They hope to achieve their evil objective of fully or partially impairing the role of the ration card.

The paper strongly criticizes the United States and its abettors for prolonging the blockade and their attempts to impair the role of the ration card, which is the only way for organizing the distribution of necessary provisions to the people.

The paper adds that the United States is carrying out a systematic plan to starve the Iraqi people through its constant pressure to prolong the blockade despite Iraq's fulfillment of its obligations under Security Council resolutions.

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Rabin Questioned on Responsibility for Beirut Bomb

TA2212193194 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Hebrew 1800 GMT 22 Dec 94

[Gadi Sukenik video report]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The prime minister has categorically rejected the allegation that Israel is responsible for the car bomb in Beirut. Rabin made these remarks after a rabbinical convention in Tel Aviv, which addressed the repercussions of the peace process. Religious parties had done all they could to foil the convention, succeeding only partially. Our political correspondent Gadi Sukenik has this report from the convention site:

[Begin recording] [Sukenik] Is Israel the one who carried out the attacks?

[Rabin] Come on, why are you asking me this question? People in Lebanon should come up with an answer to that.

[Sukenik] [passage omitted] Do the renewed negotiations with Syria in Washington mark a new stage?

[Rabin] I do not wish to comment on this issue at this point. I hope to be able to discuss it next week. [end recording]

Peres Says Hizballah Not Violating Understandings

TA2212171694 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1105 GMT 22 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres says that despite the recent escalation in south Lebanon, Hizballah is not violating the understandings reached with them in the wake of Operation Accountability. Peres said the complicated situation in Judaea and Samaria was caused because of the large number of settlements and their scattered nature rather than the Oslo agreements. Our correspondent Shulamit Schmerling reports from Haifa:

[Begin recording] [Schmerling] The recent escalation in Lebanon results from the use of more sophisticated weapons. Chance also plays a part, for example, when a shell scores a direct hit on an IDF [Israel Defense Forces] outpost. The foreign minister says that whether we like it or not, Hizballah is abiding by the understandings reached in the wake of Operation Accountability:

[Peres] Hizballah is going out of its way to heat up the atmosphere, but within the parameters of the understandings. Within these parameters Israel should and does retaliate. As long as they do not fire beyond the border it is hard to claim that they are violating the understandings.

[Schmerling] The foreign minister was speaking at an impromptu news conference in Haifa. He was flooded with questions. Question: Why have senior officers left for talks with the Syrians in Washington? Answer: The negotiations are secret and I am not going to elaborate on it. Peres admitted, however, that the progress on the Syrian track was insufficient. Question: Yesterday you met 'Arafat; the situation on the ground is complicated and difficult. Is the Oslo agreement responsible for this? Answer: We should not criticize the Oslo agreement, but rather the situation it is trying to deal with.

[Peres] The situation in Judaea and Samaria is even more complicated because of the number and scattered nature of the settlements in the area, and due to the fact that access roads traverse major cities. We are encountering a series of difficulties which must be dealt with, and yesterday we decided how to deal with them.

[Schmerling] The foreign minister welcomed the religious ruling of Saudi Arabia's mufti in favor of peace, and hopes that Saudi politicians will follow the clerics. Asked whether Israel is actually negotiating with the Saudis, Peres replied in the negative. [passage omitted]

[Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English at 1600 GMT on 22 December adds that "where Syria is concerned Peres refused to go into detail, but he did tell Sylvia Leif what he hopes will come out of the talks." In a recorded passage Peres says: "My hope is that the Syrians have changed their position, agree to an open-ended negotiations where each of the two parties can approach the negotiating table with its own opening position, without any party trying to dictate to other side the acceptance of his position."

[Asked to comment on the remarks of U.S. General Daniel (Christman) that the peace agreement will give the United States strategic advantages, such as joint military training with forces in the Middle East, Peres says: "I don't think that we are asking for American troops in order to defend our country or in order to make peace. I mean, we need an American presence, very close to a symbolic presence, in order to keep an existing peace because we are talking about an international or multinational presence once we shall agree with the Syrians; not before and not instead and not to enforce or impose such an agreement."]

U.S. Funding of Missile, Peace With Syrians Linked

TA2312112694 Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew 23 Dec 94 p 3

[Report by Alex Fishman]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] A demand that the U.S. administration finance the production of the Arrow missile, as well as the positioning of two or three missile batteries, will be raised as part of the security guarantees that Israel will ask from the United States in exchange for an arrangement with the Syrians.

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The basic cost of each missile battery is about $100 million, but the final price tag could reach as much as $200 million.

This demand is one of a series of Israeli requests for advanced defense systems as part of a peace package with the Syrians. Foreign sources noted that other Israeli requests presented to the United States include building stations for the reception of intelligence satellite transmissions and purchasing advanced airborne early-warning systems. [passage omitted]

Beilin: Syrian Peace Deal 'Impossible' in 1996

LD2212233794 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 2230 GMT 22 Dec 94

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] Israeli Deputy Foreign Minister Yosi Beilin says he now believes it is impossible to reach a peace agreement with the Syrians next year, and certainly not in 1996, when elections in Israel and the United States take place. [passage omitted]

[Begin recording] [Beilin] The current pace of the negotiations which... [pauses] with Syria, will not bring about peace in the coming month. It may bring about peace in the coming years, but I am not sure whether we can afford it to miss perhaps another opportunity, and that is why I think that what is needed now is changing this pace.

[Correspondent] Now, we have reports of Dani Yatom, the prime minister's military attache, going to Washington for a meeting—that's not enough in your view?

[Beilin] Without any reference to what you said now, I do think that if there is a dialogue between our high officers—high-ranking officers—it will be very important to accelerate the process. I wonder whether it is enough in order to change the pace. If it does change the pace, of course the (?cultivation) will be very, very important. [passage omitted] [end recording)0

Diplomat Warns Against Golan Lobby Efforts in U.S.

TA2312063094 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0500 GMT 23 Dec 94

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] [passage omitted] A senior Israeli diplomat in the United States says the ongoing lobby efforts against deploying American troops on the Golan Heights could convince the administration and the Congress that Israel does not really know what it wants. David Ze'ev reports:

[Begin recording] [Ze'ev] [passage omitted] The frustration by Israeli officials over opposition activity in the United States continues to grow, in particular concerning Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin's desire for U.S. troops on the Golan Heights in a peace pact with Syria.

This week, a senior Israeli diplomat speaking by phone from the American city where he is posted predicted that the result of the Golan lobby effort could be American second-guessing of Israeli Government requests in general in the future. The diplomat, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said until now both the administration and the Congress have pretty much accepted Israeli requests as justified. Now, he says, they will look elsewhere to check if the Israelis really know what they want, in the diplomat's words.

And if 1973 and the Yom Kippur War came around again and Israel requested an urgent military airlift, I am not sure we would get it this time, he said.

The career Israeli diplomat has served under both Likud and Labor Party foreign ministers. He says Labor, when in opposition, made its point of view clear in the United States, but he says, not like this. [end recording]

Rabin Favors 'Etzyon, Ma'ale Adumim Building

TA2312112294 Tel Aviv HATZOFE in Hebrew 23 Dec 94 pp 1, 2

[Report by Hagay Huberman]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] "I am in favor of continuing to build in the 'Etzyon Bloc and the Ma'ale Adumim area," Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin told Yinon Ahiman, Shilo Gal, and Beni Kashri'el—respectively the heads of the Efrat, 'Etzyon Bloc, and Ma'ale Adumim local councils—in a meeting he held with them at the Knesset two days ago.

The meeting came in the wake of the construction minister's decision to freeze building in Efrat. It came out in the meeting that the prime minister did not know anything about the freeze on construction in Efrat. "Efrat and Ma'ale Adumim are one and the same as far as I am concerned," Rabin added. He denied reports about plans to pull the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] out of Bethlehem, and promised: "We will not do such a thing without talking to you first." [passage omitted]

IDF Detains 2 Arabs, Closes Off Area Near Efrat

TA2312134594 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1200 GMT 23 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] At the end of the mosque prayers about one hour ago, dozens of Arabs from the village of al-Khidr near Bethlehem returned to the hill north of Efrat, where they are trying to prevent infrastructure work. Our correspondent Gil Litman reports the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] has declared the area a closed military zone and detained two of the villagers. An Israeli press photographer was detained and later released. The work in the place was suspended for the Sabbath and will resume on Sunday. Yinon Ahiman, head of the Efrat local council, called on the residents of al-Khidr and Bethlehem to embrace coexistence. He reiterated that the area is included in Efrat's master plan.

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Woolsey Visit, DPRK-Iran Missile Threat Viewed

TA2212150294 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 22 Dec 94 p B2

[Article by Aluf Ben: "A Year and a Half in a Four-Day Visit"]

[FBIS Translated Text] An important American visitor arrived in Israel on Sunday, 4 December—CIA chief James Woolsey. On that day, the cabinet held a session in which the head of the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] Intelligence Branch spoke about the Lebanonization of the Gaza Strip and the media was full of stories about 'Arafat's unstable situation. Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin, however, was much more worried by what he heard from Woolsey in Jerusalem. The U.S. envoy told the prime minister that Iran and the DPRK have resumed their cooperation in the development of the surface-to-surface Nodong missile, which has enough range to hit Israeli targets if launched from Iranian territory.

This new piece of information worried Rabin. Only three weeks before, while in Washington, he heard Woolsey say that the Iran-DPRK deal was still frozen, which confirmed what Israel and the United States had known for the past year. The connection between Iran and the DPRK was again a threat to Israel.

The CIA chief's briefing provided new background for Rabin's visit to Japan and the ROK, which are both under a threat of DPRK missiles. Rabin's main goal of his Seoul visit was to tighten security and intelligence cooperation between Israel and the ROK, with the common threat providing the setting for the prime minister's meeting with ROK President Kim Yong-sam.

Several days after Woolsey's visit, a special ROK presidential envoy came to Israel and met Israeli officials. The talks probably dealt with the missile threat and the preparations for the meeting between the two leaders. It was no accident that Rabin revealed the report about the resumed DPRK-Iranian cooperation at a news conference he held in Tokyo only two hours before taking off for the ROK. "Fired from Iran, the missiles can hit us. Fired from the DPRK, they could strike you," he told the Japanese reporters. The ROK papers carried this report on the morning of the Rabin-Kim meeting.

Rabin liked his Seoul host: A centralist leader who, although democratically elected, holds every possible authority in the country and replaces ministers whenever he sees fit. The main issue discussed at their meeting was the DPRK threat. The two leaders agreed that their countries face similar problems because they are located in tense areas—in the Middle East and the Far East—which have an effect on global stability. In the meeting, it was agreed that the two countries would exchange delegations of military officers, as a first stage of their security cooperation, and information about the Pyongyang threat. In their joint news conference, both leaders attacked the DPRK, but Kim avoided mentioning Iran which maintains close economic ties with his country.

Israel's Ambassador to Seoul Asher Na'im last week sent a report to Jerusalem summing up Rabin's visit. Rabin's talks here, Na'im wrote, advanced Israeli-ROK relations "by a year and a half." According to the ambassador, the main achievements of the visit were the agreements on intelligence and security cooperation.

Israel and the ROK maintain close ties with the United States, and both leaders refrained from insulting the protector in Washington. Yet, remarks made in closed meetings and public appearances contained concealed criticisms of the U.S. Administration for failing to take care of its allies' interests in last year's negotiations with the DPRK and not taking steps to stop the DPRK from building missiles and selling them to Middle East countries.

In August 1993, the United States demanded that Israel cut off its direct contacts with the DPRK which were meant to attain an agreement to stop selling arms in the Middle East. Israel consented and the Americans promised that, in return, they would deal with the problem themselves.

On 21 October this year, after more than a year of negotiations, the United States and the DPRK signed a framework agreement in Geneva curbing Pyongyang's nuclear plans and instead allowing it to build upgraded and less dangerous nuclear reactors. The day [illegible] the agreement was signed, U.S. Defense Secretary William Perry, speaking at a briefing in Tokyo, made it clear that the Geneva agreement deals only with the nuclear issue and does not concern other DPRK activities.

On 24 October, Professor Itamar Rabinovich, Israel's ambassador to the United States, met with a senior State Department official and heard from him that the missile issue was not stressed in the Geneva agreement, which focused on the nuclear issue. Trying to calm Rabinovich, the American official said that the United States "is worried by the missile and the terror problems."

In assessments presented to the political echelons, Israeli elements differed over the Geneva agreement. The Intelligence Branch maintained that the agreement means that the United States intends to handle the missile issue as well. The Foreign Ministry looked at the graver aspect of Perry's remarks, and opined that the agreement does not refer to the problem troubling Israel at all. Some Jerusalem officials even feared that the fact that the United States focused on the nuclear issue might be viewed by the DPRK as a green light for the continuation of arms and missile sales to the Middle East.

The ROK reacted with displeasure to the Geneva agreement, but it soon adopted an official stand aligned with the American one. Rabin told reporters who accompanied him to Seoul that before he left for the United

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States, he heard a review of the U.S.-DPRK contacts. According to him, while in Washington, he met with "senior officials who dealt with the issue." On 21 November, Rabin met Woolsey and heard his briefing on the agreement and about what goes on between the DPRK and Iran, but it seems he was not pleased with what he heard. The next day, he met Perry at the Pentagon and told him that although the Nodong development deal is still frozen, thanks to U.S. pressure, it is important to remember that the DPRK continues developing the missile on its own, and that it continues building Scud missile factories in Iran and Syria.

In the past two weeks, after the news of the renewed cooperation between North Korea and Iran came out, U.S. officials issued several statements on the missile issue. Robert Pelletreau, assistant secretary of state for Near East affairs, reported to Congress that the administration had approached North Korea and demanded that it refrain from exporting missiles to Syria and Iran. He noted, however, that the United States' influence on North Korea is rather limited.

Robert Gallucci, head of the U.S. delegation to talks with North Korea, said last week that the administration is concerned about Pyongyang's missile plan. "We were unable to ignore the export of missiles to the Middle East. Today North Korea is the only country in the world exporting missiles and missile components," he explained. He added that the termination of the North Korean nuclear plan was merely the first stage of negotiations, and that in future, the United States will demand that missiles be dismantled and that its huge army be reduced.

While in Seoul, Rabin was asked whether he believed that by signing the agreement with the DPRK, the United States has neglected Israel. He replied that dealing with the nuclear issue is the most important thing, but he would still like to see "a continuation of American activity regarding the development of long-range missiles," adding that he would discuss this with the Americans. "Will they be successful? All I know is that we have no influence on the DPRK, and unless we activate friendly elements, we will be unable to prevent this."

Rabin made it clear that Israel will not attempt to resume its contacts with the DPRK and would leave this to the Americans. He also promised Kim Yong-sam that Israel would consult the ROK should it ever decide to change this policy. At the same time, he lashed out at the "naive Israelis" who held contacts with the DPRK, attempting to offer economic assistance in return for stopping the missile sales. During his U.S. visit, Rabin criticized the "naive guys at the Foreign Ministry" who attempted to establish contacts with the DPRK, referring to Director General Eytan Bentzur. Rabin, however, forgot that he knew about and authorized those contacts until they were terminated following a U.S. demand. In the meantime, on the last day of Rabin's Far East visit, a new crisis erupted between Washington and Pyongyang over the downing of a U.S. helicopter in the DPRK. The future of the contacts between them is not clear at this stage.

No Objection to Glaspie's UNRWA Appointment

TA2312111294 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 23 Dec p 24

[FBIS Transcribed Text] April Glaspie, the U.S. ambassador to Iraq when it invaded Kuwait in 1990, will head UNRWA [UN Relief and Works Agency] operations in the territories, an UNRWA spokesman said yesterday.

Glaspie is to become director of operations in the territories in January, replacing Gun-Brett Andersson, who joined the Swedish Foreign Ministry last month.

Glaspie met Iraqi President Saddam Husayn a few days before Iraq invaded Kuwait, to discuss the crisis in ties between the two countries, and was later accused of giving him the impression the U.S. would not intervene if he invaded Kuwait.

Foreign Ministry officials said they had no objection to her appointment.

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Israeli Human Rights Lawyer Ends Visit

JN2212131494 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 22-23 Dec 94 p 3

["Special to the JORDAN TIMES" by Natasha Bukhari]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Amman—Israeli human rights lawyer Lea Tsemel, who Wednesday ended a three-day visit to Jordan, says that she is against normalisation of Arab-Israeli relations if it meant "normalisation of Israeli occupation."

Ms. Tsemel, 50, is well-known for defending Palestinians against what she described as "the arbitrarian rules of the Israeli occupation" and has for over twenty years represented hundreds of Palestinians in Israeli prison camps charged with different offences.

Ms. Tsemel's clients include members of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), Hamas resistance movement and al-Jihad al- Islami, she revealed.

"I will take on any case that is an outcome of the Israeli occupation of Palestine," Ms. Tsemel told the JORDAN TIMES in an interview, adding that her visit to Jordan was prompted by the fact that "there are so many Palestinians in Jordan" who require her services.

Thousands of Palestinians have been denied entry to the West Bank after their exit-and-return permits were expired, and the Israeli authorities have refused countless applications for Palestinian family reunification permits.

During her stay in the Kingdom, the lawyer took on a number of cases related to "Palestinians' right of return" to the occupied West Bank, and gave free consultations on the legal status of tens of other deported Palestinians, she said.

Ms. Tsemel, who lives in Jerusalem, said that she has always wanted to come to Jordan and help Palestinians here but that as an Israeli, visiting an enemy country would have been regarded as an offence to her own, she said in explaining the timing of the visit.

"The Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty enables me to be in direct contact with my clients here," she said, adding that before the accord contact with many of her deported clients in Jordan was done through their relatives in the West Bank.

Jordan and Israel signed a peace treaty ending a 46-year state of war between them on Oct. 26. Under the accord, the two sides recognised that the "human problems caused by the conflict in the Middle East cannot be fully resolved on the bilateral level" and that the parties will solve them in accordance to international law in a "quadripartite committee together with Egypt and the Palestinians" in the case of displaced persons, and "in the framework to be agreed, bilateral or otherwise, in conjunction with and at the same time as the permanent status negotiations (Israeli- Palestinian) pertaining to the territories" in the case of refugees.

But some Palestinians attacked the Kingdom's treaty with Israel saying that it falls short of addressing the issue of Palestinian refugees and displaced persons and that Jordan has abandoned their case moving towards normalising ties with Israel which continues to occupy Arab land.

Asked if she was against normalizing Arab-Israeli ties, Ms. Tsemel said that she opposed "normalising occupation" and that "everything in the field of normalising ties with Israel should be carefully examined" to avoid "eternalisation of occupation."

She said that she was optimistic that the Palestinian-Israeli limited self-rule accord reached in April "could be the frame for further development and achievements for the Palestinian people" whom she said were "experienced with the occupation and would take care that the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) would bring them back their rights."

Meanwhile, negotiations between Jordanians, Palestinians, Israelis, and Egyptians over displaced and refugee Palestinians are underway for the purpose of attaining an Israeli recognition of the Palestinians' right of return.

Jordanian officials Tuesday told the Associated Press (AP) that Jordan has asked Israel to allow the repatriation of 80,000 Palestinians who were denied entry to the Israeli occupied territories because of expired exit-and-return permits.

Head of the refugee committees for talks with Israel, Marwan Dudin said that he presented the Israeli authorities with a list of 6,250 names to be allowed into the occupied territories and that the Israelis approved the request "in principle" but no formal reply to that effect has yet materialised.

But despite the heavy criticism Ms. Tsemel has received for "meddling into the negotiators' business," the lawyer insists that these parties "should realise that they should anticipate the cooperation of other parties like human rights' activities and organisations that show a different angle of the situation."

A Palestinian lawyer assisting Ms. Tsemel in her mission in Amman said that he was skeptical that the negotiations would prove fruitful and that "people who have the right to return to their own homeland have more chance of being granted that right by resorting to the law."

About 2000 Palestinians have been deported from the West Bank since 1970 for "security reasons" and only 110 were allowed to return several months after the autonomy accord.

Moreover, the fate of over 900,000 Palestinians who fled the territories following the 1967 Arab-Israeli war hangs in the balance until 1996 when Palestinians and Israel

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start negotiations over the final status of the territories, as stipulated in the Oslo autonomy accord.

Senate Issues Statement on Situation in Chechnya

JN2212160394 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 22 Dec 94

["Text" of statement issued by the Senate on the situation in Chechnya in Amman on 22 December—read by announcer]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Jordanian Senate is following with interest and concern the painful events that have been taking place for weeks in Chechnya. News reports have spoken of intensified attacks and air raids against the people of Chechnya and an increasing number of innocent people being killed. These reports have noted the suffering of innocent children, women and elderly as a result of the fighting.

The Senate is greatly concerned that countries avoid resorting to force and using methods of destruction at a time when the world is demanding that the language of dialogue be the means to resolve differences in order to spare lives and reach a peaceful understanding among peoples. Accordingly, the Senate, which is aware of the existing ties and interests between Jordan and the two warring parties, appeals to them and to all peace-loving quarters to seek an end to the dispute in order to achieve justice and right, spare further bloodshed, and to prevent the fighting and its results from spreading to other areas.

'Unofficial' Text of Draft Investment Law

JN2112121094 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 21 Dec 94 pp 1, 7

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Amman (Petra)—The Royal Commission for Reform and Modernisation (RCRM) on Tuesday [20 December] submitted to the government a draft law aimed at encouraging investments in Jordan. The draft law is intended to create a new climate for economic investments based on clear and solid foundations, the RCRM said.

The RCRM said in a statement that the draft law was aimed at increasing domestic income, stimulating production and helping the country attain self-sufficiency.

Stressing that investment is the backbone for development, the statement said the draft law also aims at finding jobs for the unemployed fighting poverty and ensuring a higher standard of living for the Jordanian citizens.

Following is an unofficial translation of the draft law:

Article 1:

This law shall be called the Law for Encouraging Investments and it becomes effective upon its publication in the official Gazette.

Article 2:

The following words and phrases should have the meaning appearing next to it unless it is specified otherwise:

The Minister: The minister of industry and trade.

The Board: The Higher Board of Investment formed in accordance with this law.

The General Manager: The general manager of the Investment Promotion Department.

The Committee: The committee for encouraging investment formed in accordance with this law.

The project: Any investment activity which falls under the provisions of this law and the regulations and instructions pertaining to it.

Fixed assets: The equipment, machines, tools and other supplies used specifically in the project.

Production requirements: The raw and intermediate materials and any other input necessary for the industrial production of goods.

Fees: Import, customs and other fees required on the fixed assets and production in put.

Taxes: Property (real estate) tax and any other tax required in accordance with the laws in force on fixed assets and production requirements.

The Investor: The person or the legal entity investing in the Kingdom in accordance with the provisions of this law.

Production capacity: The designed or absorbed capacity of the project.

Article 3:

The provisions of this law are applicable to projects which the committee approves in accordance with a special regulation issued for that purpose.

Article 4:

For the purpose of this law, the Kingdom is divided into four development regions; A, B, C and D, according to the degree of development for each one which should be specified by a decision from the board and published in the official gazette.

Article 5:

A) For the purpose of this law the phrase "the foreign invested money" means:

i) The cash transfer to the Kingdom through licensed banks;

ii) The assets in kind which are imported to be invested in the project or to have it enlarged, developed or modernised;

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iii) The profits, returns and reserves, resulting from investing the foreign money in investment projects, if added to the capital of these projects or if invested in other projects approved in accordance with the provisions of this law;

iv) The intangible rights such as licences, intellectual rights, trade marks registered in the Kingdom and invested in its projects and owned by non-residents;

B) The committee will evaluate the volume of the capital and decide whether it was used for the purposes of the project and whether it is in the form of capital pertinent to items ii and iv from paragraph (A) above.

Article 6:

A) The fixed assets of the project will be exempt from fees and taxes on condition it be provided within four years from the date of approving the project.

B) Spare parts will be exempt from fees and taxes on condition that the value does not exceed 15 per cent of the total value of the fixed assets for which the spare parts are to be used and on condition that they are bought within 10 years from the date of starting production.

C) The fixed assets needed to expand, develop or modernise the project will be exempt of fees and taxes if the expansion, development or modernisation will result in raising the production capacity of the project by at least 25 per cent.

D) The production requirements needed for the approved project will be exempt of fees and taxes except the sales tax, in accordance with regulations that the board issues for this purpose.

E) The project will be exempt for the period mentioned in F of this article from the taxes as follows:

i) Income and social taxes on the next profit of the project;

ii) Property tax belonging to the project and used for its objectives;

F) The exemptions enjoyed by the project as mentioned in paras D and E of this article will be as follows:

i) For a period of five years if the project is in development region A;

ii) For a period of seven years if the project is in development region B;

iii) For a period of nine years if the project is in development region C;

iv) for a period of 12 years if the project is in development region D.

G) The exemptions mentioned in F above can be replaced by faster depreciation on assets at a rate between 20 and 40 per cent a year based on the type of assets and at the request of the investor and the approval of the committee.

H) Projects which are needed by the national economy and which serve its goals and which are listed by the council will be given three years of exemption in addition to the years mentioned under the provisions of this article. The projects list will be amended in accordance with the need of the economy and will be implemented on the existing projects.

I) Hotels, hospitals and medical treatment centres will be granted additional exemptions of taxes and tariffs for their purchases of furniture and equipment once every seven years.

J) In case the project is transferred during the exemption period from one development area to another it will be treated in terms of exemption as if it were established originally in the area to where it was moved.

K) In spite of anything mentioned in any other legislation, the accumulated optional reserve and the carried over profits will be exempt from any capital tax if they were added to the capital and were used in expanding or developing the project.

Article 7:

A) Net profits of the project will, under a committee decision, be exempt from the income and social services taxes for another year in case of the following cases:

i) Expanding the project in a way that increases its production capacity for more than 25 per cent.

ii) If the net value of the final product rises over 50 per cent.

iii) If the project's exports of commodities and services reach 25 per cent of its sales. Thus it will be given another year for every equal percentage.

iv) If the project produces a new commodity produced for the first time.

v) If the project was in the form of a public shareholding company or was converted into a public shareholding company.

B) The additional exemptions should not be applicable for more than a period of five years.

Article 8:

Prices and other incentives will be created and granted to the distinguished production and exports activities and research and development programmes.

Article 9:

Projects subject to the new law and exemptions and privileges according to article 6 are applicable as of the start of actual production.

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Article 10:

Under this law a special committee will be set up to be known as the Higher Investment Committee chaired by the prime minister and including the ministers of industry and trade, finance, tourism and transport, the Central Bank governor, the head of the Federation of Jordanian Chambers of Commerce, and the president of the Amman Chamber of Industry as well as persons with sufficient experience. The director general of the Royal Commission for Reform and Modernisation (RCRM) will follow up the implementation of the resolutions.

The council is to hold meetings at least once a month.

Article 11:

The council will be entrusted with creating the appropriate climate for investment to achieve the objectives of comprehensive development including:

A. Setting a national strategy for investments.
B. Working out a strategy to develop production sectors.
C. Working out investment policies.
D. Endorsing regulations related to investments.
E. Reviewing complaints about the committee's decision.
F. Approving the RCRM's annual budget.

Article 12:

The RCRM aims to encourage investments in the Kingdom by:

1. Building up confidence in the investment climate;
2. Stimulating investments in projects;
3. Facilitating the registration of projects;
4. Following up on executed projects;
5. Creating an investment window to facilitate the issuance of licences for investments;
6. Offering advice and providing information and data concerning investments.

Article 13:

The creation of a committee to be entrusted with the task of encouraging investments chaired by the minister of industry and trade and to include the director general of the Investment Promotion Department, representatives of the ministries of finance, municipal and rural affairs and tourism.

The committee is to meet upon a call from the prime minister and the minister has the right to invite persons to consult with them on investment matters and has the right to appoint one employee of the department to serve as rapporteur for the committee.

The committee has to be ready with replies to investors' queries concerning conditions for launching investment projects within two months.

Article 14:

The committee assumes the following responsibilities;

A. Approval of projects whose legal conditions are finalised;
B. Approval of exemptions;
C. Approval of applications for the transfer of property ownership;
D. Recommending measures related to the creation of appropriate climates for investments;
E. Examining reports submitted to the RCRM department concerning projects benefiting from the law;
F. Setting programmes for promoting investments and attracting investors making sure that the projects which enjoy exemptions are in line with socio-economic development.

Article 15:

Upon the committee's recommendations the council has the right to cancel exemptions and facilities for any project subject to the provisions of this law if violations of the regulations were discovered.

The council also has the right to cancel exemptions and facilities granted to a project if it is proved that the equipment and fixed assets intended for that particular project have been sold or used for other purposes.

Article 16:

Non-Jordanian investors will be treated like Jordanian investors under this law.

Non-Jordanian investors have the right to invest in the following fields:

Industry, tourism, housing, health, education, modern technology and computer, maritime transport, railway and livestock.

Non-Jordanian investors have the right to hold up to 49 per cent of the capital of the following projects: Trade ventures, public shareholding companies, consultancy services, land and air transport contracting and agriculture.

No projects can be nationalised, confiscated, seized, impounded, frozen or placed under custody except under a court order.

Article 17:

Investors benefiting from this law have to:

1. Inform the department in writing about the completion of the installation of assets and the date of production;

2. Open a bookkeeping system to be operated under an accredited auditor;

3. Open a register for inventory of all fixed assets involved in the project.

4. Provide information and date and documents required by the department about the assets.

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Article 18:

A. In case of the transfer of ownership of projects the projects will continue to enjoy the original benefits and exemptions provided the new owner would pursue the same project in full.

B. Investors have the right to sell fixed assets to other investors who can benefit from the provisions of the same law for the same project under the same conditions with the committee's approval.

C. Investors have the right to sell fixed assets to any persons provided the new owner pay the required fees and the customs duty.

D. In case two firms merging, the resulting merger would be responsible to abide by the provisions of the law if any one of the two firms had enjoyed the exemptions under this law.

E. Investors have the right to export the fixed assets from additional taxes if the cost prices of the fixed assets to be imported were raised in the country of origin.

Article 19:

Investors have the right to transfer abroad foreign capital which entered the country and invested in projects in accordance with banking systems.

Article 20:

Investors have the right to transfer abroad profits from investments in the country in accordance with legislations and banking laws.

Article 21:

Non-Jordanian employees working in technical and administrative jobs in these projects have the right to transfer abroad 70 per cent of their salaries and their compensations according to Jordan's banking laws.

End-of-service compensation for non-Jordanians can be transferred abroad in full.

Article 22:

Provisions of this law shall apply to non-Jordanians occupying technical or administrative posts, who are partners in an ordinary company or shareholders in a private shareholding company which owns the project.

Article 23:

A. the Cabinet may, upon the recommendation of the committee, exempt every year a maximum of 10 per cent of the taxable income of any project in the industrial and mining sector from the income and social services tax if the exemption amount is allocated for constructing housing units for workers in the project, either directly by the company or indirectly through a specialised housing institution.

B. the exemption provided for in paragraph A of this article shall also be granted if the amount of exemption is used for the construction of cultural or health facilities benefiting project workers, provided that the Ministry of Labour attests that such buildings are suitable for such purposes.

C. Exemption will be granted from income tax for the annual expenditure on running and maintaining the promises referred to in paragraph B above.

D. If the project owner does not construct the buildings referred to in the paragraphs above within a period of three years since the date of granting the exemption by the council, any income exempted under it shall be taxable after that period.

Article 24:

A. Guarantees accorded to Arab capitals under provisions of the agreement on investment and transfer of Arab capitals among Arab countries and all the agreements concluded among Arab countries and any amendments thereto shall also apply to Arab capital invested under provisions of this law.

B. Non-Arab investors will have the right to insure their capital and investments against non-commercial risks at any insurance company or institution.

Article 25:

Principles and procedures governing the resolution of conflicts resulting from investment operations and the arbitration measures to be followed in accordance with special regulations to be issued for this purpose.

Article 26:

An industrial record will be established to record all machinery and equipment belonging to the projects in accordance with special legislation to be enacted for this purpose to facilitate obtaining credit facilities.

Article 27:

A. Provisions of article 7, 8, 10, 11, 12, 14, 16 shall not apply to decisions passed by the Cabinet before the enforcement of this law.

B. Any investment projects approved under the provisions of the Investment encouragement Law No. 11 of 1987 and the amendments thereto will continue to benefit from the exemptions from duties and taxes granted under that law without giving the project any further exemptions from duties and taxes provided by this law.

Article 28:

The Investment encouragement Law No. 11 of 1987, the amendments thereto and the regulations issued under it and the Law on Organising Arab and Foreign Investments No. 27 of 1992 and the regulations issued under it shall be cancelled.

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Article 29:

The prime minister and the ministers shall enforce the provisions of this law.

According to the RCRM statement, the draft law was based on a national strategy which aims, among other things, to:

—Raise the national economic performance.
—Enhance the national economy's capabilities and promote self- reliance.
—Achieve more control over national economic performance.
—Improve the country's balance of payments and foreign currency reserves and reduce imports and increase exports.
—Give a pioneering role to the private sector in investment.
—Create a sound and suitable investment and economic climate.
—Encourage the trend towards market economy and personal initiatives.
—Achieve social justice and equal distribution of profits of investments.
—Create new jobs.
—Develop the Jordanian specification and measurement systems with a view to improving quality of products.
—Unify measures and regulations regarding investments.
—Ensure foreign investments and the transfer of modern technology to Jordan.
—Encourage the creation of major corporations like public shareholding companies or holding companies.
—Benefit from other countries' experiences that achieved real and tangible successes from investments.

The statement stressed that in formulation the draft law, the RCRM was guided by the following general principles;

1. To ensure equal and fair distribution of the gains accruing from development.
2. To offer exemptions and facilities to projects which aim at ensuring food security and promote services.
3. Exempt all fixed assets and spare parts needed for production from taxes and fees.
4. Grant additional exemptions for the development of existing projects.
5. Grant additional privileges to holding companies or shareholding companies.
6. Introduce simple rules governing investments.
7. Open the door for foreign capital.
8. Open the door for foreign capital and its profits made here to be transferred abroad.
9. Facilitate settlement of disputes over involving investment in Jordan.
10. Create an administration in caring for investment and supervising investments.
11. Create an industrial register to list all equipment.
12. To offer incentives and prizes to encourage distinguished production works and exports.
13. Prevent any form of confiscation, or nationalisation of projects.
14. Exempt profits carried over from the previous years from income or social services taxes.

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Al-Hariri Blames Israeli Intelligence for Car Bomb

NC2212204094 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 2000 GMT 22 Dec 94

[Statement by Prime Minister al-Hariri, followed by remarks in response to questions by unidentified correspondents after an ordinary meeting of the Council of Ministers in Beirut on 22 December—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] His excellency the president opened today's meeting by offering condolences to the families of the young men who fell victims in the explosion that occurred yesterday. He spoke about the explosion and its causes. Practically, all the security reports the state received show that the Israeli intelligence stands behind this operation.

All citizens are aware of the issue of the occupation of the south, the resistance, and the continuous Israeli threats. Lebanon has a certain stance on the issue of the resistance and the implementation of Resolution 425. The security situation and this vicious circle will not stop unless Israel withdraws from the occupied Lebanese territories in accordance with Resolution 425. The day Israel is convinced that it cannot control the region and that it must live peacefully, peace will be near at hand. However, if Israel wants to control the region, peace will be very far away. We have said this before and our Syrian brothers also said it. This is our stance. It will not change as a result of such practices or more base acts.

His excellency, myself, and all the ministers would like to greet the Lebanese on the occasion of the holidays. Many happy returns.

[Correspondent] Rabin was asked [words indistinct] explosion. He said the answer is in Lebanon. What does he mean, and how do you respond to this?

[Al-Hariri] They have been making threats for a week. It is clear.

[Correspondent] Have investigations picked up on any leads, has there been any arrests, and is there any information?

[Al-Hariri] The security agencies have some information. I am not in a position to disclose the information they have. This is on the one hand. On the other hand, it is clear that those who were martyred were not killed in an operation that occurred by accident.

[Correspondent] Is there fear of a fresh assault?

[Al-Hariri] There are security measures. These operations undoubtedly will not change reality.

[Correspondent] Do you view this operation as a message to the Lebanese state, or did it target a specific person?

[Al-Hariri] It was a criminal act, that's it. It was not a message. What do you want me to say? This is a purely criminal act in which aggression was committed against civilians in their own homeland. The least that can be said about that act is that it was a cowardly act. It is not bravery to plant a booby-trapped car and kill passers by. Where is the courage and heroism in such an act?

[Correspondent] About the agenda of the meeting—what did you discuss?

[Al-Hariri] Most of the items on the agenda have been published. [passage indistinct]

[Correspondent] There is a constant demand for the implementation of Resolution 425. Does this mean that Lebanon during negotiations in only demanding the implementation of this resolution?

[Al-Hariri] This is the resolution on which are negotiations are based. We entered the Madrid negotiations on the basis of Resolution 425. We said that we are a peace-loving state and part of the region. If comprehensive and full peace prevails in the entire region, we will be part of that region. But the basis we rely on in our negotiations with Israel is Resolution 425.

Hizballah Connection to Car Blast Viewed

MM2312094894 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 23 Dec 94 pp 1, 4

[Report by Tariq Tarshishi: "Questions About Truth of Split in Lebanese Hizballah; Two Persons Arrested in Connection With Beirut Explosion"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Beirut, London, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT—Lebanese security services began yesterday to interrogate two persons who were arrested following the booby-trapped car explosion in the southern suburb of Beirut for their suspected involvement in the incident. The security services declined to reveal their identity, while political sources have expressed fears that the explosion could be an indication of internal disputes in Hizballah's ranks.

While Hizballah, in whose zone of influence the explosion occurred, accused Israeli intelligence of being behind the incident, political and security officials are wondering whether the aim of the explosion is to undermine the general security situation in Lebanon or to send a certain message to Hizballah following the recent security escalation in the south and General Ehud Barak's accusation against Hizballah of violating the "Katyusha agreement" and the "points of understanding" by firing on Israeli forces from Lebanese villages.

Leading figures in Lebanese Hizballah have not ruled out that the suburb explosion might have been aimed at assassinating one of its leaders; for example, its secretary general, Shaykh Hasan Nasrallah, or 'Imad Mughniyah, a former Hizballah official, who is accused of planning the abduction of a number of Western hostages during the Lebanese war, especially as his brother, Fu'ad, was killed in the explosion. [passage omitted]

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Reportage on Recent Attacks in South Lebanon

Amal Groups Attack Israeli Patrol

NC2112184494 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1630 GMT 21 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] The Amal Movement's Operations Center in the south has announced that one of the movement's groups at 1530 today attacked a joint patrol of the Israeli enemy and the agents.

At the same time another group bombarded the occupation forces posts in 'Alman and al-Shumariyah. Earlier in the afternoon, the enemy artillery bombarded the outskirts of Frun, al-Ghanduriyah, Qa'qa'iyat al-Jisr, Zawtar al-Sharqiyah, Zawtar al-Gharbiyah, and the al-Litani River basin with 155 and 120-mm shells. The shelling originated from al-Zaffatah and (Muhaydib). Rockets were also fired from the 'Alman-al-Shumariyah Road.

Fierce clashes ensued between the resistance men and the patrol members for 15 minutes. The resistance men managed to destroy an M-113 armed personnel car belonging to the agents and killed and wounded its passengers.

More Shelling in South

NC2212093894 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0915 GMT 22 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Israeli artillery today shelled the area running alongside the road between Habbush and 'Arab Salim and the outskirts of al-Luwayzah, Mlita, Jabal al-Rafi', Jabal Safi, and al-Jurmuk.

At midnight last night a group of the Amal Movement's Lebanese Resistance Brigades attacked the al-Suwayda' position with rockets and machine guns. In the fierce fighting that followed, the position and the personnel manning it received direct hits.

IDF, SLA Positions Shelled

TA2312063494 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0600 GMT 23 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] A short while ago, terrorists began a coordinated shelling of IDF [Israel Defense Forces] and SLA [South Lebanese Army] positions in the western and eastern sectors in south Lebanon. The terrorists are firing mortars at IDF and SLA positions along the ('Ali Tahir) ridge in the eastern sector and at outposts in the Bayt Lif area of the western sector.

Our correspondent in the north Yo'av Aviv was told by Lebanese sources that the IDF and SLA were retaliating with heavy artillery fire.

SLA Reports 'Saboteurs' Attacks

NC2312092294 Kafr Killa Voice of the South in Arabic 0800 GMT 23 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Our military correspondent reports that at around 0630 today saboteurs launched a failed attack on South Lebanese Army [SLA] posts in 'Arab Salim, Kafr Rumman, and al-Nabi Tahir with machine guns and rockets under the cover of heavy artillery fire. No one was hurt. The personnel manning these posts checked the attack and pursued the saboteurs, whose casualties are not yet known.

The SLA and Israeli Army artillery are returning the fire originating from al-Nabatiyah al-Fawqa, Habbush, and the 'Arab Salim ridges.

Our military correspondent adds that the saboteurs renewed their artillery shelling of the SLA posts in 'Arab Salim, Kafr Rumman, and al-Nabi Tahir without causing any casualties.

AFP has carried a report broadcast by the saboteurs' Voice of Light Radio yesterday that three SLA personnel yesterday fled the 'Ayn ('Imyah) Center to the north of the border area. But a responsible SLA source denied the report yesterday and said it was part of a malicious propaganda campaign.

Two Military Personnel Killed

NC2312094094 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0900 GMT 23 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Internal Security Forces Officer Candidate Fawzi al-'Izzah, who was in charge of the Jba' Police Station, and Sergeant Akram Mahdi of al-Qusaybah Town were killed in a raid by Israeli helicopters on the Habbush-Dayr al-Zahrani Road at 0950 today. The NATIONAL NEWS AGENCY correspondent said a rocket directly hit the jeep in which the two men were traveling.

Security sources reported that the Israeli warplanes shelled resistance posts in Iqlim al-Tuffah. [Israeli] helicopters and warplanes are still conducting intense flights over al-Nabatiyah and Iqlim al-Tuffah.

For 20 minutes two Israeli helicopters strafed Jabal al-Dahr, the Habbush ridges, and Abu Rashid on the southern tip of Western al- Biqa' using heavy machine guns. The Lebanese Army antiaircraft guns confronted the enemy aircraft.

Shelling also continued from last night until dawn today in the al-Daydabah hills, Jabal al-Dahr, the outskirts of al-Qatranah, and the woods of Jabbur, where about 45 155-mm artillery shells landed. Shells are still falling in these areas intermittently.

Further on Events in South

NC2312113794 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1015 GMT 23 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted] AFP reports that an Israeli warplane attacked a Hizballah post in Jabal Safi without mentioning any casualties.

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An Israeli soldier was killed and five others wounded in a series of attacks by resistance men on joint positions held by Lahd and Israeli forces this morning.

Sources close to Hizballah said that the Sfayr Martyrs Group attacked al-Tuhrah, al-Suwayda', al-Dabshah, and 'Ali al-Tahir from 0615-0645 today and that fierce clashes ensued involving heavy artillery and machine guns.

Security sources said three katyusha rockets were fired on the Israeli-occupied area of south Lebanon today.

Israeli shelling targeted the ridges of 'Arab Salim, Jarju', al-Luwayzah, Habbush, al-Sit Zubaydah Bridge, the Tasah River basin, the derelict army barracks in al-Nabatiyah, Jabal al-Rafi', the woods of al-Nabatiyah al-Fawqa, Kafr Rumman, and Kafr Tibnit. The shelling coincided with flights by Israeli warplanes in the south, namely over Iqlim al-Tuffah and al-Nabatiyah where they were confronted by Lebanese Army antiaircraft guns.

[AFP at 1030 GMT on 23 December in an al-Nabatiyah, Lebanon-datelined report adds the following: "Lebanese police said their two colleagues were killed three hours later when an Israeli helicopter blasted their jeep with two missiles on a road just north of the zone. 'The jeep exploded into flames,' an officer said. Another helicopter destroyed an empty van on the same road and a fighter bomber fired a missile at a suspected Hizballah position in the Iqlim al-Tuffah hills, also north of the zone, police said. An officer with the UN Interim Force in Lebanon also said Israel fired 130 shells on the outskirts of a dozen villages, while Hizballah fired about 50 shells and four Steiger rockets into the zone. The Lebanese army declared a state of maximum alert and said it fired back at Israeli artillery."]

IDF Raids Hizballah Targets

TA2312111994 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1100 GMT 23 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Artillery exchanges resumed in south Lebanon approximately one hour ago. IDF [Israel Defense Forces] and SLA [South Lebanese Army] artillery are shelling Hizballah targets in Iqlim al-Tuffah. The terrorists retaliated by launching katyusha rockets at Marj 'Uyun.

Our correspondent Yo'av Aviv reports from Lebanon that the IDF is using artillery, tanks, and helicopters. The IDF spokesman reported that Israel Air Force planes and gunships raided Hizballah terrorist targets this morning. All our planes returned safely to base.

Fadlallah: 'Neighboring' Country Helped Bahrain

NC2112075994 Ba'labakk Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic 0630 GMT 21 Dec 94

[Report by radio correspondent—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] Ayatollah Sayyid Muhammad Husayn Fadlallah has expressed his belief that the problem in Bahrain is not sectarian. He affirmed that [word indistinct] governmental oppression will lead to an explosion, which no government can withstand because oppression does not last.

Ayatollah Sayyid Muhammad Husayn Fadlallah expressed this opinion during the weekly Koranic explanation lesson. The ayatollah also said:

[Begin Fadlallah recording] We will note, as we did during the Friday sermon, that there was no condemnation from the Western circles, particularly the American one, or any reaction against this bestial oppression in which, according to reports, a number of people fell and after which prisons were teeming with detainees. We notice that the issue was not the problem of the Bahraini authorities. A country neighboring Bahrain dispatched its soldiers to [word indistinct] with the Bahraini security forces to control the demonstrations. The problem in most countries in the Arab world is that the governments are fighting their own people and do not allow them to express their opinions, even through peaceful means.

We know that the demonstrators who were demanding elections and the release of Shaykh 'Ali Salman started off in a peaceful manner. But such governments, which feel they do not have a popular basis, cannot bear to hear a voice rising in opposition against them, even in a peaceful manner, because [words indistinct] internally and externally. We wish to tell the Bahraini and other authorities that the more severe governmental oppression gets, the more likely it is that a huge explosion will take place that governments will not be able to withstand. Injustice cannot last, but if it does, it becomes destructive. [end recording]

Hizballah Confirms Support for Khamene'i as Marja'

LD2112183394 Tehran IRNA in English 1409 GMT 21 Dec 94

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] Beirut, Dec. 21, IRNA—Secretary General of Lebanon's Hizballah Sayyid Hasan Nasrallah here Wednesday laid emphasis on Grand Ayatollah Seyyed 'Ali Khamene'i's marja'iyat [state of being a source of emulation]. He made the remark in a meeting with head of Iran's trade commission of the Majlis Hojjat ol-Eslam Mojtahed Shabestari. Heading an economic delegation, Hojjat ol-Eslam Shabestri is in Beirut to attend the inaugural ceremony of Iran's 8th trade exhibition in Beirut.

Interviewed by IRNA, Hojjat ol-Eslam Shabestari said that the Lebanese Hizballah has declared its full support for the Grand Ayatollah Khamene'i and its obedience to the world's Muslim leader, Grand Ayatollah Khamene'i.

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Shabestari said that in a meeting with Lebanese parliament speaker, Nabih Birri, they discussed the current situation in Lebanon, southern Lebanon in particular, and the successes of the Islamic Resistance Movement in its anti-Zionist struggle.

Consolidation of bilateral parliamentary ties, setting up of Islamic coutries' interparliamentary union were among other issues discussed at the meeting, Hojjat ol-Eslam Shabestari added.

In another meeting with Lebanese Trade Minister, Hagop Demurijian, Hojjat ol-Eslam Shabestari discussed bilateral trade relations and transportation of goods between Iran and Lebanon.

He further told IRNA that the Lebanese officials called on Iran to assist Beirut in reconstruction of its refineries. The idea was welcomed by the Iranian officials, Hojjat ol-Eslam Shabestari said adding that the issue will be followed up in Tehran. [passage omitted]

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Papers Stress Rejection of Secret Talks With Israel

JN2112083694 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0545 GMT 21 Dec 94

[From the press review]

[FBIS Translated Text] In an editorial entitled "The Correct Standard," AL-THAWRAH stresses that Syria works in broad daylight, refuses to work in secret, and does not accept tricky ways and dark cellars. This is because when territory and rights are an issue that has national and pan-Arab dimensions, it is impossible to ignore the will of the people who offered great sacrifices in the long march of struggle to defend, and acquire, their territory and rights. This fact refutes all pretexts for secret work and negotiations that are held in the dark. This is especially the case since the experience of the partial deals that have been struck has revealed the danger of departing from the basic path of the peace process, which adopts the resolutions of international legitimacy as the basis for the just and comprehensive solution.

AL-THAWRAH notes that Israel's emphasis on secret negotiations confirms that it is determined to arrive at partial, unequal deals through which it can achieve its interests without paying attention to the Arabs' interests, objectives, and rights. This in itself constitutes a distortion of the substance of peace, which Israel is trying to replace with partial, incomplete agreements that imply a conspiracy to humiliate the Arabs.

AL-THAWRAH stresses that the broad mass that is rallying behind the position of Syria and its leader al-Asad, as well as the growing world support for this position, provide conclusive evidence on the soundness of Syria's call and action to achieve a just and comprehensive peace that is based on a complete withdrawal from all of the occupied Arab territories. The search for relations, normalization, and the opening of borders will not succeed and what has been achieved in that regard will not continue because the people have the decisive word about peace and the people will not accept anything that infringes on their territory and dignity.

AL-THAWRAH concludes by saying: How can Israel convince the Arabs of the benefits of normalization while it still threatens them with aggression, occupies their territory, and aspires to humiliate them and establish military hegemony over them? Rights are indivisible and the territory, the entire territory, is the core for any genuine progress in the march of peace—and withdrawal is the key.

In a commentary entitled "What is Behind the Israeli Escalation?," AL-BA'TH says: Anyone who reads the text of the peace process, which was launched more than three years ago now, will not find a single article or sentence referring to secret talks among the parties concerned with the peace process. Secrecy is a method invented by Israel and accepted by the self-rule negotiator and then by the Jordanian treaty negotiator. They all thought that this was the path to peace, while in fact it was only a policy used by people who want to conceal facts from their people.

The paper says: Syria rejected what the others have accepted because its policy is based on clarity and its course is declared to the people and the entire world.

AL-BA'TH refers to Israel's attempt to promote several falsehoods regarding secret talks. The paper says Israel failed to achieve any progress in that regard because of Syria's position, which rejects any method that may derail the peace process from its path.

The paper says: Syria will not be pushed into traps, hatched carefully by the Rabin government. It will not pause long before the flagrant threat announced yesterday by the Israeli Army chief of staff who threatened war if peace is not achieved.

AL-BA'TH concludes: This Israeli escalation, which is accompanied by threats to Lebanon, means that the Rabin government still adheres to its rejection of the peace process. With its timing, this escalation may have been made to block the road before the exchange of ideas that was agreed upon during Christopher's recent tour in the region. Is there any sign in all these developments to suggest that the peace process will emerge from its stalemate?

Press Examines Recent Israeli 'Threats'

JN2312101594 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0550 GMT 23 Dec 94

[Press review]

[FBIS Translated Text] In a commentary today, the newspaper AL-THAWRAH discusses the recent Israeli threats that have come in parallel with the policy of trickery and intransigence that the Tel Aviv rulers are pursuing against the peace process. This policy coincides with the campaigns of instigation against Syria.

The paper says: Such vicious campaigns and threats, and the attempts by those who launch them to fool the world and reverse logic by falsifying and distorting the facts, represent exposed falsehoods and the exportation of Israel's strangling political and economic crises after the Oslo and Wadi al-'Arabah agreements failed to bring foreign financial aid or prosperity to their signatories. These agreements have also proven that they are only lame solutions that carry the seeds of their own death.

Consequently, these agreements are a flagrant public departure from peace and its requirements, as well as an exposed attempt to blackmail Syria, Lebanon, and the world. This is shown by the continued daily aggressions against the towns and villages of steadfast southern Lebanon and also by the policy of subversion and

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detonating booby-trapped cars in Lebanon, thus treacherously and cowardly targeting civilians—women, children, and the elderly. This policy can only indicate the [Israeli] failure to confront the heroic national resistance.

AL-THAWRAH asserts that the Tel Aviv rulers are mistaken if they imagine that such a policy toward Syria can be useful or can change Syria's constants regarding peace. These rulers should deal with Syria with the logic of rationality and international legitimacy. According to Damascus, peace should only be founded on just and comprehensive bases.

In another commentary entitled "Peace and Arms," AL-THAWRAH says: It is now clear to everyone that Israel is the party obstructing the peace march and rejecting all the relevant international resolutions. This obstructive policy is consolidated by sophisticated arms that are being poured into Israel. These arms have turned Israel into a military barracks, in the full sense of the word, whose mission is to launch attacks and threaten with attacks.

Knowing that Israel is an aggressive and expansionist entity, it is natural for arms to increase Israel's aggressive character, its greed for occupation and expansion, its failure to take into account the requirements of peace, and its disregard of the peace efforts. This is exemplified by the daily Israeli attacks on Lebanon, the refusal to withdraw from the occupied territories, and the feverish activity to abort the Madrid peace formula because it does not conform to Israel's policy of expansion and hegemony.

The newspaper AL-BA'TH discusses the defect in the Arab situation, asserting that it is a temporary one and that [Arab] rights will be regained in full. The paper explains that this defect was due to the Oslo and Wadi al-'Arabah agreements and also a result of a clear shortsightedness by some with regard to what has happened.

AL-BA'TH points to the Israeli campaign of deception and despair, which has been intensive for some weeks, against Syria. The paper notes that this campaign is targeting Syria's firm positions on the peace process. It says: Such campaigns against us will not be useful; they will enhance our solid position, our adherence to our rights, and our determination to work for a just and comprehensive peace that will regain all our rights and preserve the Arab nation's dignity.

In the "With the Events" column, AL-BA'TH discusses the massacre in Beirut's southern suburb and regards it as a new, hideous, and rancorous escalation by the Israeli Mosad against Lebanon, which is recovering and enhancing its steadfastness while removing the burden of the past sedition and resisting the Israeli occupation.

AL-BA'TH describes this act as a cowardly one, exactly like the crime in the Sayyidat al-Najah Church a few months ago. The paper says: Beirut, which has offered sacrifices, will reject submission and the terms of the occupiers.

Al-Asad Receives Credentials of Jordanian Ambassador

JN2312075094 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 23 Dec 94 p 1

[FBIS Translated Text] Damascus, PETRA—Ahmad al-'Adayilah, Jordan's ambassador in Damascus, yesterday presented his credentials to Syrian Arab Republic President Hafiz al-Asad and conveyed to him greetings from His Majesty King Husayn.

His excellency the president stressed to the ambassador that he and the Syrian officials are interested in preserving good brotherly relations between the two countries.

Qaddurah Receives Iranian Parliamentarians

JN2212173294 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1615 GMT 22 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] People's Assembly Speaker 'Abd-al-Qadir Qaddurah this afternoon received an Iranian parliamentary delegation led by Mr. Mojtahed-Shabestari, head of the parliamentary branch in the Majles. The session was attended by Shakir Is'ayyid, chairman of the Arab and Foreign Affairs Committee in the People's Assembly, and the Iranian ambassador in Damascus. They talked about ties and ways to further them, particularly in parliamentary, economic, and commercial areas.

Qaddurah restated Syria's principled positions and abiding commitment to liberating the occupied territory and setting up a just and comprehensive peace founded on UN resolutions under the leadership of His Excellency President Hafiz al-Asad.

The Iranian delegation noted Syria's constancy on the purpose of regaining rights and facing up to challenges. They underlined the need to boost the volume of trade between the two friendly countries.

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India

Manipur Governor Resigns; Assembly Disarray Continues

BK2312111694 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 23 Dec 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Manipur governor, Lieutenant General Vijay Kumar Nayyar, has resigned. According to a Rashtrapati Bhavan [President House] communique this morning, his resignation has been accepted by the president. The governor of Nagaland, Mr. Oudh Narain Shrivastava, will hold additional charge of Manipur till a successor is appointed.

Meanwhile, political uncertainty continues in Manipur following the disqualification of 23 members of the state assembly by the speaker, Mr. H. Borobabu. A notification by the assembly secretariat in Imphal yesterday evening had said that the disqualification order will take effect from Wednesday [21 December] afternoon.

Earlier in the day, the Guwahati High Court stayed the disqualification process of 23 MLAs [members of Legislative Assembly] allowing them to participate in the trial of strength of the Rishang Keishing ministry. The vote of confidence is to take place today, but the Manipur cabinet yesterday evening requested the governor to postpone the assembly session till the 28th of this month.

A message just received says that the Manipur Assembly has unanimously passed a no-confidence motion against the Rishang Keishing ministry in the absence of ruling Congress-I members. The one-day special session of the House was held without the customary inaugural address by the governor. The House also approved the order of the speaker disqualifying the 23 members under the Anti-Defection Act against the ruling of the Guwahati High Court. The speaker, Dr. H. Borobabu Singh, later adjourned the House sine die. Earlier, disqualified MLAs were not allowed to enter the House. The new governor, Mr. O.N. Shrivastava, has been sworn in by the acting chief justice of the Guwahati High Court, Mr. Justice J. Sangma, at the Imphal Raj Bhavan.

President Accepts Resignation of 3 Ministers

BK2212150994 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1430 GMT 22 Dec 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The president has accepted the resignations of three central ministers on the advice of the prime minister. According to a Rashtrapati Bhavan [President House] communique they are the minister of health and family welfare, Mr. B. Shankaranand; the minister of state for food, Mr. Kalp Nath Rai; and the minister of state for rural development and parliamentary affairs, Mr. Rameshwar Thakur.

Chernomyrdin Meets With Rao, Comments on Agenda

BK2312105894 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 23 Dec 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] India and Russia are to sign a wide range of bilateral agreements today, including economic and military cooperation during the visit of the Russian prime minister. Mr. Viktor Chernomyrdin, who arrived in New Delhi last night, was given a ceremonial reception at the Rashtrapati Bhavan [President House] this morning. Speaking to newspersons after the reception, he said agreements include protection of mutual investments, avoidance of double taxation, and military and technical tie-ups. Answering a question, Mr. Chernomyrdin said both the sides will discuss restoration of the rocket technology deal for the Indian space program. Replying to questions on the domestic situation, he denied that President Boris Yeltsin is losing army support following Russia's intervention in Chechnya.

On his arrival at the Rashtrapati Bhavan, the Russian prime minister was received by the prime minister, Mr. P.V. Narasimha Rao, his cabinet colleagues, and the lieutenant governor of Delhi. During his stay the visiting dignitary will hold discussions with the president, the vice president, and the prime minister. A high-level Russian delegation is accompanying Mr. Chernomyrdin.

Later, India and Russia agreed to make special efforts to expand and deepen cooperation in newer areas. Welcoming the visiting Russian prime minister, Mr. Viktor Chernomyrdin, to his first visit to India, the prime minister, Mr. P.V. Narasimha Rao, expressed satisfaction at the steady growth of bilateral relations. In a meeting with the visiting dignitary, Mr. Rao expressed the hope that his visit will further strengthen all-round Indo-Russian cooperation.

Iran

Commentary Views Failure of Unity in GCC

LD2112183294 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1552 GMT 21 Dec 94

[Unattributed commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] The summit of the heads of the member states of the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC] ended today in the Bahraini capital, Manama. In this two-day summit, the six members of the council discussed political, economic, and security issues.

The most important issue that affected the summit was the territorial disputes between the members of the council. It was deemed possible that the negative consequences of such disputes would disrupt the process of cooperation between the countries of the southern shores of the Persian Gulf.

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A month ago, Qatar—which is one of the members of the cooperation council—boycotted the council's ministerial summit in Riyadh because of the intensification of territorial disputes with Saudi Arabia.

The presence of similar acute disputes between Qatar and Bahrain made the participation of the Amir of Qatar in the present Manama session doubtful. However, he was finally encouraged to attend the summit after he received certain assurances that the summit will debate this problem and will try to find a suitable solution for it. The question that can be asked is that why during the 14-year life of the cooperation council, the process of greater convergence [hamgarayi] and unity among the members of the cooperation council has not met with much success, and the border problems between the members of this council still exist with the same intensity as before?

What increases the answer to this question is the fact that the members of the cooperation council, as far as political and social structures are concerned, are very close to one another. [sentence as heard] Such a positive point could have speeded up the process of greater convergence and unity among these countries. However, such a process has never materialized, and as far as the trend of greater unity is concerned, these countries are still where they started 14 years ago.

In reply to these questions, one must say that there is no doubt that the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council was formed due to security issues and the special circumstances in the region. However, changes in the nature of concern over security has brought fragility to the most important basis of convergence and unity in the council, and now not much remains of that basis.

In reality, the fact that the arrogant powers have created an adverse atmosphere against the Islamic revolution, as well as the passage of time and the various developments in the region, in particular the attack by Iraq—who used to be considered as a friend of that council—against Kuwait, have transformed the viewpoints and security concerns of each of the shaykhdoms in the southern shores of the Persian Gulf. These factors, moreover, brought about some changes in the stances of these states.

Additionally, the refusal of the southern Persian Gulf littoral states to establish joint armed forces, which would be able to defend them against any foreign attacks—especially after the oil war [the second Gulf War]—and their decision to sign bilateral military pacts with Western countries, demonstrate that the small GCC countries are worried about the disparity in the level of strength among the GCC member states. Consequently, they are not prepared to invest only in that council in security areas.

The attack by Saudi military forces on Qatar's al-Khufus border post and the recent shootings on Qatar's ships by Saudi border guards have at least convinced Qatar's leaders that Saudi Arabia poses a threat to the national security of their country. Meanwhile, Bahrain which has similar border disagreements with Qatar is trying to alleviate its security worries by aligning itself with Saudi Arabia.

In the final analysis, one can say that the elimination of common security threats to the GCC member countries and the appearance of internal security worries among the council members are among the most important reasons for the failure of the course of unity in the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council.

Foreign Ministry on GCC 'Misunderstandings' Over UAE

LD2212165594 Tehran IRNA in English 1530 GMT 22 Dec 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Dec. 22, IRNA—Iran's Foreign Ministry here Thursday [22 December] termed as regretful the recent stance taken by the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council (PGCC) [GCC] about misunderstandings between Iran and the United Arab Emirates.

In a statement the Foreign Ministry expressed regret over failure of the PGCC members to realize Tehran's goodwill, utmost manifestation of which is articulated in President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani's speeches.

The Foreign Ministry statement added that Iran sticks to its previous stance, that the three Iranian islands permanently belong to Iran, and that Tehran will always welcome a visit to Tehran by the UAE's state minister for foreign affairs in response to a visit to the UAE by Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati.

The PGCC members in their final resolution, issued in Manama Wednesday, claimed that Tehran is not serious about solving the misunderstanding with the UAE. The resolution also called on Iran to take its case with the UAE to the International Court.

Foreign Ministry's statement also stressed that Iran attaches great importance to and respects good neighbourliness, cooperation and trust among Islamic countries in the region.

Iran favours bilateral negotiations with no precondition in a bid to remove misunderstandings with the UAE, the statement made it clear.

It also dismissed as anti-Islamic and detrimental to the interests of regional Muslim countries, any attempt to sow discord among the Islamic countries. Tehran's experiences over the past 15 years point to the fact that any territorial claim in the Persian Gulf region and insisting on intensifying tension will serve the interests of the domination-seeking powers and will help the Zionist regime consolidate its foothold in the region.

Iran's Foreign Ministry in its last year's statement following the 14th session of the PGCC members outlined responsibilities of the regional states in this sensitive and

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strategic region. It further urged all PGCC members to maintain stability in the region and emphasized that regional security must be maintained collectively. Meanwhile, it continued, Iran then was hoping for creation of a better atmosphere in light of the prudence and insight of the heads of regional countries for removal of ambiguities and creation of strong bonds among the regional Muslim nations.

In conclusion, the statement reiterated that Iran considers April 1992 letter of UAE President, Shaykh Zayid Bin-Sultan al Nuhayyan, to his Iranian counterpart President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani as the basis for settling the misunderstandings between Iran and the UAE.

Government Ready for Unconditional Talks With UAE

LD2212143794 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 22 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] In response to the final statement of the 15th summit of the heads of states of the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council [PGCC] [GCC], the Foreign Ministry has announced: With the significance that we attach to, and the respect that we reserve for, good-neighborly relations, joint efforts, and the strengthening of trust and cooperation between the Islamic countries of the region, the Islamic Republic of Iran welcomes the continuation of unconditional bilateral talks in order to resolve any misunderstanding with the UAE [United Arab Emirates]. Moreover, Iran considers any effort to sow discord among Islamic countries as being contrary to Islamic principles and the interests of the Muslim countries of the region.

The Foreign Ministry statement stresses that the experience of the last 15 years shows that any kind of territorial claim in the region, and insistence on the intensification of disputes, merely serve the interests of the domineering powers, and facilitate the spread of the Zionist regime's influence in the region.

The statement furthermore expresses regret at the lack of regard for the good intention shown by the Islamic Republic of Iran within the framework of the address by the esteemed president to the international seminar on the Persian Gulf, which was held on the eve of the 15th summit of the heads of PGCC states.

The statement adds: With emphasis on its previous principled stances concerning the fact that the three Persian Gulf islands will always belong to Iran, the Islamic Republic of Iran welcomes the visit to Tehran by the UAE's minister of state for foreign affairs, which is in response to the visit by Foreign Minister Velayati to Abu Dhabi. Furthermore, Iran considers the letter of Shaykh Zayed, in April 1992, to the esteemed president of the Islamic Republic of Iran, as the primary basis for the settlement of the existing misunderstandings between the two countries.

Another part of the statement asserts: In its statement last year addressed to the 14th summit of the heads of states of PGCC, the Iranian Foreign Ministry once again stressed the responsibility of the countries of the sensitive and strategic Persian Gulf region in safeguarding stability and security in the region. That statement expressed the hope that wise and intelligent thinking by the heads of these states may bring about more suitable conditions for removing doubts and uncertainties, and that this in turn could help to consolidate the firm bonds which exist between the Muslim nations of the region.

It is noteworthy that the final statement of the 15th PGCC summit refers to the UAE's claims on the Iranian islands, and states that, since Iran has not done anything serious about this issue, the matter should be referred to the International Court at The Hague. THIS REPORT MAY CONTAIN COPYRIGHTED MATERIAL.

West Criticized for 'Military Build-Up,' 'Hypocrisy'

NC2212175394 Tehran TEHRAN TIMES in English 20 Dec 94 p 2

[Editorial: "Weapons Procurement for Defense Only"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Reading the one-sided reports in the Western media about Iran's supposed "military build-up", one cannot help but be appalled by the level of hypocrisy and the double-standard that allows for the massive military build-up by Persian Gulf littoral states, while denying Iran the right to procure necessary arms for its own defense.

Indeed, the propaganda against Iran is meant to work as a smoke screen for the massive sale of arms to the Arab countries who are on a spending spree.

The West, and especially the U.S., would like to limit Iran's military technology to less than state-of-the-art. They prefer that the Arab littoral states have the upper hand in this region.

While the Western media and politicians are regurgitating these charges against Iran, Western think tanks and Western professional intelligence organizations are coming up with analyses that vindicate Iran.

In an interview last week with the Voice of America, Joseph Keshinshian, a researcher at Hoover Institute, said he believes that, in the past decades, the Middle East has become the main buyer of armaments in the world. As an example, he cited the Sultanate of Oman which spent 23.2 percent of its gross national product on military hardware between 1972 and 1988.

The intelligence branch of Great Britain's Ministry of Defense, known as DIS, has also concluded that Iran could not possibly have made much stride in procurement of advanced Western military technology for the

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reason that, since the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, Western countries have closely monitored their exportation of military technology.

The more sophisticated think tanks usually write with a certain restraint, whereas the Western media has to please and appease the public, raising a fuss, so that it can stay in the vicious competitive market.

Every now and then, however, one can hear or read a truthful statement uttered or written by the Western media. Among them one can mention the recent statement by Radio France which said that Iran will have to spend 25 billion dollars on weapons before it can reach the same level of military strength it had before the revolution. The radio concluded that, even then, Iran's military technology would not be on a par with that of Saudi Arabia or Iraq.

Iran has always declared that whatever purchase it makes is for defensive purposes and that its military budget is only a fraction of the preposterous multi-billion dollar budget which the Persian Gulf states have allocated for their military build-up.

Anyone who is familiar with Iran's Five-Year Development Plans realizes that the country is mobilizing all its resources to revitalize its economy. Iran aims to create a peaceful and prosperous society, a society where every Iranian can enjoy the highest standard of living in the region.

Warmongering, going into debt in order to save the bankrupt military industries of Britain and the United States are not Iran's goal.

France Lifts Restrictions on Persian-Language Teaching

LD2212205694 Tehran IRNA in English 2026 GMT 22 Dec 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Dec. 22, IRNA—The French Embassy said in a press release here today that previous restrictions against Persian as a foreign language at French schools had been lifted.

It said Persian would be considered as an established foreign language in the final high school examinations as of the next school year.

The French Embassy said the French Government had previously adopted certain restrictive measures against Persian at the final high school examinations solely as a result of financial problems.

President Receives Uzbek, Pakistani Ambassadors

LD2112204894 Tehran IRNA in English 1343 GMT 21 Dec 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Dec. 21, IRNA—President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani said here Wednesday [21 December] that Iran was ready to employ its resources and potentials to help the process of reconstruction in Central Asian republics including Uzbekistan.

In a meeting with the new ambassador of Uzbekistan to Tehran, Khajeyev Erkin Nametevic, the president emphasized importance of exchange of ranking delegations between the two states in order to deepen mutual cooperation. Iranian president expressed satisfaction with consolidation of independence in the newly-independent republics in Central Asia.

The Uzbek ambassador said that expansion of ties between the Central Asian nations and the Islamic Republic of Iran serves to strengthen independence in Central Asian states. Erkin Nametevic said that the warm welcome for Iranian delegation accorded by Uzbek people indicated their deep respect for the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Nametevic called for consolidation of relations between Uzbekistan and the Islamic Republic of Iran and expressed hope that the Uzbek Embassy will open in Tehran in the near future.

Meanwhile, Pakistan's new ambassador to Tehran, Khalid Mahmud, in a separate meeting with President Hashemi-Rafsanjani said that Pakistani officials expect a wide prospect for expansion of relations with the Islamic Republic of Iran. Strong political will in the two countries can serve as a basis for expansion of economic and trade cooperation between Iran and Pakistan, Khalid Mahmud said.

The Pakistani ambassador said that Pakistan believed that establishment of joint economic commission will speed up the process of expanding mutual cooperation between the two countries.

He briefed the president on the agenda of the forthcoming summit meeting of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) due to be held in Islamabad. He said that Pakistan hoped that the next summit will make decision to increase the investment, launch necessary cooperation in the field of trade, economic development of the region and the Central Asia in a bid to establish a solid basis for expansion of trade cooperation in the region.

President Hashemi-Rafsanjani said that increasing cooperation and frequent exchange of views between Iran and Pakistan will serve to restore stability and security to the region.

The president emphasized the importance of the two countries' common stance on regional and international issues and matters related to the Muslim population s of the world including those of Afghanistan, Bosnia-Herzegovina and the ECO member states in light of the two countries interests.

He said that fulfilment of the agreements reached between the two countries should be accelerated and that

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the plan to transfer Iranian gas to Pakistan and India will guarantee the security in the region.

President Hashemi-Rafsanjani stressed the need for further security cooperation between Iran and Pakistan to combat drug traffickers in border areas.

Commentary on 'Sensitive' Situation in Bahrain

NC2212191394 Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 18 Dec 94 p 15

[Unattributed commentary: "Crisis in Bahrain"]

[FBIS Translated Text] It is almost a week since the small shaykhdom of Bahrain was engulfed in a wave of unrest. This unrest comes in the wake of the arrest of one of the congregational imams of that country named Shaykh 'Ali Suleyman [name as published]. In his address, he had called for the revival of the parliamentary system in the country and had condemned the economic problems such as unemployment that have been thrust on the Shiites of that country, who comprise half of Bahrain's population.

In 1354 [year beginning 21 March 1975] the Bahraini parliament was dissolved by Shaykh 'Isa-bin-Salman al-Khalifah; and, naturally, power became the monopoly of the government. Nevertheless, in 1371 [year beginning 21 March 1992] an assembly named the consultative council made up of 30 business magnates and elite figures who were directly appointed by the Bahraini shaykh was substituted for the regular parliament. This council, which was set up as a result of mounting social protests and opposition against the lack of a Judiciary in the country, could not assert its independence in the political arena in practice, due to its affiliation with the shaykh. Therefore, the Manama Government was accused of trying to retain full power within the jurisdiction of the shaykh so that it should not be divided among the three branches, that is the executive, the legislature, and the judiciary.

This phenomenon, that is, trying to escape legislation and a parliamentary system is one of the factors that spawned this crisis in the social systems of the Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC] member countries and erupts sporadically according to the prevailing junctures.

The diminutive countries of the southern Persian Gulf region have a predilection toward asserting their chieftaincy, which is another manifestation of their monopolistic power. This phenomenon can be observed not only in Bahrain but in the other shaykhdoms as well. For many years, the people of Saudi Arabia have been suffering from the concentration of power in the hands of the king and princes and in the absence of a legislature and a judiciary. All the executive, legislative, and judicial issues are the products of the way of thinking of the princes and their puppet courtiers in the various cities of Hijaz. [ancient name for Saudi Arabia]

In Kuwait, as well, the parliament was dissolved in 1355 [year beginning 21 March 1976] in the wake of the similar action by the Bahraini amir. As in Bahrain, a government council replaced the parliament in Kuwait. The dissolution of the parliament, which generated a wave of popular protests, eventually forced the Kuwaiti Amir to retreat and reopen the parliament. However, this parliament, which is under the Kuwaiti amir's supervision even more than before, was once again dissolved in 1365 [year beginning 21 March 1986]

In Oman, another GCC member, the sultan is the embodiment of all power. There is no constitution in the country, and all the current laws for administering the country are issued in the form of decrees on the part of the sultan and are generally considered mandatory. Therefore, the question of the separation of the three branches of government does not arise and the sultan governs all the three branches. He himself defines and delineates obligations or changes them according to his own whims.

The arrest of Shaykh 'Ali Suleyman last week proved a suitable catalyst especially for the Shiite people of Bahrain to take to the streets and to use slogans in favor of laws, a parliament, and the elimination of discrimination. The Muslim people of Bahrain are dissatisfied because their country is not under the rule of law and because Bahrain has become a center for the debauchery and corruption for American, Saudi, and European magnates. The people of Bahrain are discontented because the entire fortunes of society are dominated by one limited family, and there is no law and order in this shaykhdom.

During the course of the clashes between the security forces and the police in the past six days in Bahrain a large number of people have been arrested. Most of the clashes occurred in Manama. In any case, Bahrain is now in the throes of a very sensitive situation, and the elimination of this crisis requires immense political wisdom and tact on the part of the officials, something that the Shiites of that country do not expect from them.

Assistance in Rebuilding Bosnia Planned

LD2112215794 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1630 GMT 21 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Following a six-day visit to the Republics of Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina and the signing of three agreements on road, naval, and air cooperation, Akbar Torkan, the minister of roads and transport, returned to Tehran this morning.

The minister of roads and transport spoke to our correspondent, describing the outcome of his visits as very satisfactory, and said: On the basis of our talks, the Islamic Republic of Iran has announced its readiness to reconstruct damaged industrial units, destroyed bridges, and to build railways in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

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Iran will also help build a railroad from the Ploce port in Croatia to Sarajevo, the capital of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

On the outcome of his visits, the roads and transport minister also said:

[Begin Torkan recording] We will establish direct flights between Tehran and Zagreb in the near future. We will also establish naval transportation between Iranian and Croatian ports. Alongside these talks, we also discussed the issue of Bosnia-Herzegovina, and later we also visited Bosnia-Herzegovina.

The interesting issue, worth paying attention to in the visit, was that we decided to help the government of Bosnia-Herzegovina keep its industries working. There is a 2.5 million-tonnes steel plant in Zenica that, if it remains operational, the value of its products can maintain a great number of Muslims. There is a very big aluminum plant, there is a significant bauxite factory, as well as pharmaceutical, chemical, and textile plants.

We have also some cooperation with Croatia, such as the purchase of four ships from Croatia. The government of Croatia also favors this cooperation.

The Islamic Republic of Iran has sent 9,200 tonnes of oil as a gift for the people of Bosnia-Herzegovina; but that oil is still waiting at the port of Ploce, and the Croatian Government has not provided facilities for the transfer of this oil to Bosnia. Until the day I left, only 3,500 tonnes of the oil had been sent to Bosnia. [end recording]

UN Provides $427,000 for Registration Organization

LD2212134394 Tehran IRNA in English 1050 GMT 22 Dec 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Dec. 22, IRNA—The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) will provide dlrs. 472,800 for Iran's National Organization for Civil Registration (NOCR) to improve the registration of vital events system in Iran, it was announced here Thursday [22 December].

According to a press release issued by the United Nations information center here, a project document was signed here Wednesday between UNFPA representative, Michael V.D. Schulenburg and deputy head of NOCR for project and programs Hadi Rahmati.

The long term objective of the project is to help the NOCR attain the goal of complete coverage of the civil registration in Iran and thus to enhance the formulation of population policies, development plans and programs in the country, the press release said.

It added that under the three-year project, the NOCR will try to increase the coverage of registration of birth and death in particular in rural areas through using the services of volunteers.

The assistance to NOCR, which will start in January 1995, is one of the activities foreseen under the UNFPA country program for the Islamic Republic of Iran for the period 1994-98, the U.N. information center said.

Official Emphasizes Trade Information, Research

LD2112140594 Tehran IRNA in English 1222 GMT 21 Dec 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Dec. 21 IRNA—Deputy Commerce Minister, Mohammad Nahavandian said that collection and dissemination of trade information and commercial policy research were the key objectives of the government.

Speaking in an exclusive interview with the 'Economic Review' of the English daily 'IRAN NEWS', Nahavandian, also head of the Institute of Trade Studies and Research, said that removing all obstacles that hamper export growth and providing financial facilities for exporters were among the major aims of the ministry.

As for making useful information available to exporters, the official noted a computerized information center, linked to international data banks, has been established in the Commerce Ministry since last month.

It quoted Nahavandian as promising that similar centers would be established in the provinces in a near future.

The deputy minister added that the committee which, from one year ago, was charged to review the pros and cons of Iran's membership at General Agreement on Tarrifs and Trade (GATT) was expected to finalize its deliberations soon. The recommendations of the committee would then be submitted to the cabinet, he said.

The Commerce Ministry has charged since last year to gather relevant information, contact relevant ministries to seek their views regarding optimum conditions for joining GATT, and scrutinizing GATT's general conditions for membership.

The paper quoted Nahavandian as saying that in order to familiarize foreign businessmen with the comparative advantage that [words indistinct] enjoy, trade [words indistinct] would be established in the next few months.

The official added that an 'information council' has also been established in the ministry to follow up the progress, and supervise the activities of information centers, wrote the daily.

Commenting on the need to find suitable markets for Iranian-made products and also to determine the comparative advantage areas of the economy, Nahavandian said that a series of seminars were planned to be held in the future to determine the trade potentials of each province and locating natural and man-made resources that could be utilized.

With the help of local economic and trade experts in each province, these possibilities would be explored and

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made known to international businessmen for possible international investment and trade relations, IRAN NEWS said.

Underground Water Pollution Causes Concern

LD2212133794 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 22 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] If the current trend of polluting the underground waters in the country continues, a large part of these sources will be contaminated and undrinkable within the next 10 years.

According to the chairman of the board of State Organization for Research into Water Resources, the waste water from the refineries and industrial areas, as well as, sewage from the cities and hospitals are the main factors responsible for polluting the underground waters.

He asked the State Environmental Protection Organization to take action as soon as possible to confront strongly the elements who pollute the underground waters.

Minister Reports Increase in Industrial Exports

LD2312120894 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 23 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] More than $450 million worth of industrial goods have been exported since the beginning of the current [Iranian] year [beginning 21 March 1994].

Announcing this at a ceremony for the inauguration of a number of industrial units in Semnan Province, the industries minister [Mohammad Reza Ne'matzadeh] said: Exports of Iran's industrial goods have increased by 78 percent during the last nine months, compared to the same time last year. He added: This figure is expected to rise to $900 million by the end of the current year [20 March 1995].

He also said that 1,000 industrial production units will become operational by the end of the current year.

The industries minister urged owners of the country's industrial units to improve the quality and presentation of their products.

Nepal

Communist Government Wins Vote of Confidence

BK2212161794 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 22 Dec 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Nepal's minority Communist government today won a vote of confidence from the country's Parliament. The three-week-old government headed by Mr. Man Mohan Adhikari won a unanimous mandate after it tabled a motion of confidence this morning.

Pakistan

Prospects for Foreign Investment Considered

BK2312004494 Karachi NAWA-I-WAQT in Urdu 19 Dec 94 p 10

[Editorial: "Foreign Investment: More Agreements, What Are the Prospects?"]

[FBIS Translated Text] As a result of U.S. Deputy Energy Secretary Bill White's visit to Pakistan, U.S. firms have signed 18 agreements for investment worth about $2.5 billion. Earlier, investors from the United States, France, and Hong Kong had expressed readiness to set up industries in Pakistan. The foreign investment commitments so far total about $20 billion. The government claims these commitments reflect the success of its policies. This claim may be true for the present, but one has to see how much capital these foreign firms which have signed agreements will be ready to actually invest. The answer to these questions depends on a few factors, with the first being political stability. The flow of investment will depend on whether there is political stability in the country. If the opposition succeeds in unseating the government, no one can say definitely whether the next government will comply with the current international agreements and maintain the same economic policies pursued by the current government. One is bound to think so in view of the fact that the People's Party has given stepmotherly treatment to the Nawaz Sharif government's economic reforms and placed some projects, like the motorway, in the cold storage. In principle, there must be a consensus on planning for economic development and prosperity in any country, and economic policies should not be rolled back in the wake of a change in government.

The second factor that helps attract foreign investment is infrastructure. Regrettably, our country lacks adequate infrastructural facilities. There is only one railway line linking the north to the south. The number of freight cars for transporting goods is limited, while separate railway lines are required for certain thermal and coal-operated power projects. The one big question is whether we will be able to establish a communication network linking Karachi and the project sites within a few years.

The third and most important factor is the law and order problem. The current situation in Karachi, particularly, is very alarming. The prime minister sometimes says that there are disturbances only in 12 of the 80 police districts of the city, but sometimes she claims that the situation in Karachi is approaching rebellion. The fact is that the government has totally failed in its efforts to curb terrorism and subversive activities in Karachi and if, in spite of this chaos and disorder, foreign investors are still ready for and serious about investing in projects around Karachi and in the central areas of the country, then it can only be termed as a miracle. The people already harbor various doubts and suspicions in this regard.

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The fourth important factor is the attitude of our bureaucracy, which has the habit of creating obstacles at every step. The red tape does not allow files to move forward. The bureaucrats of the Central Board of Revenue are deft in stalling anything which is progressing smoothly, which then arouses anger and resentment among industrialists and investors. In the past, several governments declared intentions to open a one-window operation to do away with official convolutions. Every budget policy announces that in the future, industrialists will not be required to seek prior approval for establishing facilities, but the difficulties faced at every step are beyond description.

It is also essential to view foreign investment through the perspective of the GATT. One significant question in this context is that if we have to open our doors to foreign goods in a few years time, will our own products be able to compete in terms of price and quality? If we sign the agreement to ultimately turn the country into an open market for foreign goods—which the present government has done—which investor will be ready to set up industries here? If the present government wishes to add another feather in its cap merely on the basis of investment commitments made on paper by foreign investors, then that is its right, but mere paper agreements cannot fill the stomachs of the people. If the government really wants to change the fate of the country and its people, then it must pay full attention to ensuring political stability, maintaining law and order, providing infrastructure, ensuring continuity in government policies, and eliminating red tape.

Police Arrest 'Foreign-Trained Terrorists'

BK2212133294 Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 22 Dec 94 p 1

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Karachi, Dec 21: Police arrested a big gang of foreign-trained terrorists and recovered huge sophisticated weapons including wireless sets from Gulistan-e-Janhar last night.

The gang operated from four flats of Janhar Square in Gulistan-e-Janhar. Thirteen [number as published] members of the gang have been arrested so far and they are going through intensive interrogation.

According to details, Shara-e-Faisal police received a tip about the gang and informers were deployed to keep eye on the activities of the criminals. Finally raids were arranged at flat Nos B-10, E-25, B-16 and B-17 of Janhar Square. During the raid police arrested 13 members of the gang and recovered a wireless set of high frequency, a set of walkie talkie, 5 TT [Tokarev] pistols, four Russian-made hand grenades, six Kalashnikovs, and several hundred rounds for KK [expansion unknown] and TT pistols.

During the interrogation the gang revealed that it is comprised of several dozen men having a fleet of 25 vehicles and a communication network. They disclosed that they were involved in various terrorist activities in the city.

Those arrested were identified as Shahzaib, Syed Musaffar alias Bhutto, Ayaz Chandni, Naimatullah, Mukhatar, Safdar Hussain alias Iqra, Abdul Majeed, Raja Khalid Mahmood, Muhammad Pervaiz, Muhammad Mateen, Muhammad Ejaz and Muhammad Ali. [names as published]

Sri Lanka

President Pledges 'True Democracy' Within Year

BK2212123394 Colombo Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation International Service in English 1045 GMT 22 Dec 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] President Chandrika Kumaratunga has pledged to establish a prosperous society and a true democracy within one year. The president in a TV interview said that the government has the fullest confidence in the peace process. It has exchanged six or seven letters with the LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] regarding the resumption of peace talks. The LTTE has accepted the government's proposal for a cease-fire. The president declared that this could be identified as a first step toward a political solution for true peace as envisaged by the people of the north as by ourselves.

Ms. Kumaratunga spoke at length on the government's economic policy. She said that the new economic program will be implemented within a year. The main thrust of the new economic plan will be to launch industrial and agricultural ventures to upgrade production. More employment will be generated to bring down inflation and stabilize prices. Local and foreign investors will be given ample opportunities to open industrial ventures. The government's aim is to establish a favorable economic climate to maintain industries effectively and to safeguard the employees' rights. The president appealed to the working class to give the government one year to implement these policies.

The government has designed its economic policy to bring down prices of essential commodities; while in the process of implementing a long-term scheme, the prices of essential items have been reduced temporarily to prevent the escalation of prices. [sentence as heard] The government will import items in competition with the private sector. Its intention is to bring down prices through the establishment of a competitive market. The president said that the prices of items this year are lower in comparison to the prices which prevailed during the same period in the past two years as a result of the action taken by the government.

Ms. Kumaratunga promised that the government will fulfill its pledge to eliminate corruption. She said it is engaged in a silent revolution to safeguard the rights of the people democratically. Action will be taken

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according to the law against those government officials and members of parliament found guilty of bribery or corruption charges. The Presidential Secretariat has set up a special unit to receive information regarding acts of bribery and corruption. The president stressed that in most instances there were no valid reasons for the wave of strikes in government and private sector establishments after the present government came into power.

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